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TROUT FISHING

IN THE

ISLE OF MAN.

By S. M. TOD.

Revised to date by Mr. S. J. HARRIS, President of the
Isle of Man Angling Association.

Reprinted from Brown's Guide to the Isle of Man.

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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE OFFICE OF "THE ISLE OF MAN TIMES,"
DOUGLAS.

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TROUT FISHING IN THE ISLE OF MAN.

Whatever pleasure it gives me to add my quota to the useful information, and instruction, contained in the following pages, still it is with much diffidence that I presume to revise, and make such alterations as may seem needful. It must, however, be remembered that thirty years have elapsed since the publication of "Trout Fishing in the Isle of Man," and that the local changes have been great, the facilities for angling largely increased; and the powers of the Legislature successfully exercised (to suppress poaching, and improve the fishing). Therefore, it has become highly necessary to thoroughly revise the book, in order to make the information as accurate as possible to date. Written so long ago, by Mr. S. M. Tod, and dedicated to his brother, Mr. E. M. Tod—one of the ablest writers of the present day on piscatorial subjects, for the *Fishing Gazette*, and other well-known papers)—I have been careful, as strictly as possible, to adhere to the original text, and trust nothing in my humble efforts will mar the work of a past master in the sport all anglers love so well.

SAM. J. HARRIS,
President of the Isle of Man Angling Association.

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TROUT FISHING

IN THE

ISLE OF MAN.

THE RIVER GLASS.

There is nothing in my humble opinion so refreshing and invigorating both to mind and body as a day's trout fishing amongst the lone glens and mountains of our native country; and to those whose profession or business is of a sedentary nature, and who have in their boyish days been initiated into the various methods of capturing those wary and bright-spotted mountaineers, the sport must be doubly enchanting—as it leads the mind almost unconsciously back to the past, when, rod in hand, with a bagful of worms, we filled our creels, or as likely our pockets—the only bugbear in perspective being a scolding from mamma when we returned to the parental roof “mud to the eyes,” sopping wet, and savagely hungry. But when the contents of creel or pocket were emptied and ranged in gradation on one of the large kitchen dishes, with a few sprays of fern to improve if possible the appearance of the bright-spotted treasure of ‘wallopers,’ we would have echoed the sentiment with Paul Bedford in a well-known comedy, in saying: “Guilty—and I glories in it!” It seems very extraordinary to me that long ere this no enthusiastic Waltonian in the Island (and there are many of them) has attempted to give the benefit of his knowledge and experience of the “gentle art not simple,” in the shape of a few practical hints to those of our summer visitors who may be anglers, as well as to the resident fraternity.

In the first instance, we shall take Douglas as our centre, with the many beautiful little streams in its vicinity as radii, although they do not converge to the same point. Douglas River is now mercifully preserved from the poaching raids it was constantly subjected to. Its

long, still, and deep pools in the lovely Nunnery Grounds are all well stocked with "lusty trout," which are strictly preserved. The introduction of some 10,000 Loch Leven and other trout has done much of late years to improve the breed. They can never be short of food as long as the water remains dammed back as it now is, and the surrounding trees afford their share of the insects the trout delight in. Large numbers of the creeper, and the larvæ of the Mayfly have also been added. The erection of the railway bridge on the Castletown line has done much to deepen and preserve the river. From the bridge named, up to Tromode, the greater portion is privately preserved by the riparian owners; but the Association have some nice water at the Quarter Bridge. From Tromode upwards a large portion of the water is in the hands of the Association. At what is called the waterfall, or weir, on the road side, which is the first pool, I have often killed six or eight without leaving the spot; but they were generally small, with an occasional one a quarter of a pound. It may not be out of place to remark, in favour of the climate of the Island, that, on one day, I killed nine very fair trout in this pool with "fly." Passing to the ivy-covered bridge, on either side of which there are a few good deep pools where you may have a good run, provided the village school boys are not at large. On crossing the bridge there are two roads before you. Take the right, and keep it until you arrive at a small cottage on the top of the hill. On the right of this there is a footpath which takes you through a field; then passing a clump of trees which grow on an eminence on your left, go down to the river, commence above the mill dam, which you will at once perceive before you, and fish up. There are many capital pools from this as far as Lewin's Mill. The best I know is the one directly opposite the Rifle Range—it always bleeds well if fished carefully—but the pools there, and even as far as Baldwin, should be finished in the same manner, with "fly." And now as to "flies." The best cast you can use on this river are Golden Plover Spider as a point fly, Dotterill Spider as a first "bob," or "drop," with Black Spider for the third. In all small rivers spiders are the most killing "flies," dressed on very fine silk worm gut or horsehair, if you can use it, and average sized round or sneck bend hooks (Limerick are generally too thick in the wire); and, above all things, let the flies be tied lightly. Flies purchased at any tackle-dealers, unless made to order, have generally twice the amount of "feather" requisite. The best anglers I ever knew (and I have met many in Scotland and elsewhere) "dress their own flies." They wear better, generally kill better, and are much more satisfactory and economical.

The first bridge you come to on leaving Tromode is St. George's: about one hundred yards below that, on your right-hand side, there is a small stream which joins the main in conjunction with the mill-dam. It is full of trout—that I can vouch for—and can be fished with success, using worm alone as bait. I have seen a good basketful taken from it after a night's rain. This branch stream is nearly two miles in length, the upper portion being a series of capital pools and runs; but the banks on either side are of a rough and swampy nature, and seem a very likely cast for woodcock or snipe. From St. George's to the next bridge a few good casts may be had. The mill-race on the left contains some capital trout: but they are exceedingly shy, and it is scarcely worth while leaving the river to give them a trial. We now come to the junction of the East and West Baldwin streams, which form the main river about fifty yards below the bridge. The right-hand branch, which is much the smaller of the two, is the East Baldwin River. It is fishable only with worm. The banks are particularly brambly, which is a source of much annoyance in blowy weather, as just when you are about to make a favourite cast the

line is caught round an overhanging branch, and in going forward to disentangle it you frighten every fish in the pool: when the fish are scarce an occurrence of this sort is doubly annoying. Taking the main stream, or left branch, and after half an hour's fishing, we arrive at the village of Baldwin. Fish, if you have time, the stream which passes the house which used to be the village inn on the left. I remember killing four dozen and a half there after two or three hours' fishing with worm. My basket was quite full; and the trout, though black mountain trout, were all of a fair size, a few of them being half a pound weight each. Mr Gelling, the village blacksmith, will give you all the information concerning the streams, besides making you as comfortable in his little room as circumstances will permit. He is exceedingly chatty; and, like Longfellow's, Village Blacksmith:—

"A mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands."

But we must push forward, rod in hand, and, if you will, we will keep the main stream. At Baldwin we should change fly for worm tackle; and as, with cautious steps, we pursue our way to Injebreck, fishing the while, and reverting to our late friend—

"You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing his village bell,
When the evening sun is low;"

until we gradually lose the sound that indicates the busy hum of men, and find ourselves verging upon the base of the mountains at Injebreck; but during this period we should have made no small addition to the number in our basket, as the pools as far as this are deep and well stocked. There are two streams, both of them equally good, which join below Injebreck. It will take an hour or so to fish either, so that a party of two having fished the main river in conjunction, should take separate ways, always having appointed time to meet on the bridge at the Injebreck Hotel, allowing time to fish the separate streams. In conclusion, if you wish for success in this or any other mountain stream, keep well out of sight, or use a long rod, and let your tackle be of the finest description. I consider it a good day's fishing commencing at Tromode, from this to Baldwin, with fly, and from thence to Injebreck, with one of the tributaries at its source, with worm, to bag four or five dozen; and this you should do in favourable weather, provided your wrist and eye are in good condition.

THE RIVER DHOO.

The Dhoo, or Black River, which joins the Glas below the Quarter Bridge, contains some of the handsomest and best-fed trout in the Island—in my humble estimation, more nearly approaching in flavour the well-known Loch Leven trout than any other I have seen. This, I think, is easily to be accounted for. The river for the most part is deep and sluggish; the bottom being covered with thick green weeds, which of themselves are a certain harbour for mollusca, together with small shellfish, of which trout are exceedingly fond, especially during the winter, when surface and other food of a like description are "out of season." The banks in a number of places are exceedingly subterraneous, boggy, and dangerous (that's metre); nevertheless they are capital shelter for trout, and quite a puzzle to poachers. This river, I may mention, contained, and does still contain, if I am not misinformed, some fine pearl mussels, but I never had the curiosity to test it. But now, you will naturally ask, "How about the fishing?" Commence opposite Braddan Church, which

is about one and a half miles from Douglas, and fish up, with worm. Use one or two small shot to carry your bait well to the bottom, and beware of "snags," or stumps, roots of trees, etc., or you may lose your casting-line at least. The last time I fished here I got foul of a "snag" as I thought; but, in my endeavours to free the line gradually, fished up a splendid gut cast, several yards of good hair line, and a "stunning" top-piece, all fast to it. What the man could be thinking of to lose all this, I can only parallel by Long Tom Coffin's description of his whale: "The critter must have been in a flurry." We shall now go on to the Union Mills, which are about a mile from Kirk Braddan. If there is a breeze on the mill-dam, you may change worm for fly ("spiders"), either golden plover or dotterel. On again entering the main river from the dam there are abundant good pools, and some I am certain not less than six or eight feet in depth. Fish up carefully until you arrive at a small stone bridge, on the left of which is the farm-house of Ballaquinney: from this to the bridge above is preserved by the owner, Mr. Holt, Vice-President of the Association. It is a most excellent piece of water, and not hard to fish. Joining the main stream at a stone bridge is a capital mountain burn. It must be fished with worm for the first half-mile, when it opens out into a beautiful lakelet, overshadowed by the oaks of Glen Darragh. By judiciously deepening this charming pool, and clearing the bottom from mud, Mr Holt has succeeded in getting a fine stock of fish; above the place mentioned, the fishing is very hard, but the trout are, as a rule, hungry. Returning to the main stream, there is excellent fishing up to the village of Crosby. It is in the Association's hands. On the right-hand side here, there is a small stream which passes through the village: you may wander up and dip in here and there with some success. But before closing the subject, let me assure you that I have killed many a good dish of "fizzers"—I don't mean those thundering big cigars that are sold to the summer visitors, but trout, and such trout—ye Epicureans—as are worthy of only one relish, namely, "pepper and salt."

PORT SODERICK RIVER.

To the nearest fishable point of Port Soderick River is about three-quarters of an hour's walk from Douglas. The glen is on the old road to Castletown, and the river itself, which passes through it, can be easily fished in three or four hours; but after a heavy night's rain it will take much longer, as you can go over the same ground again with tolerable success. Commence at the bridge over which the road passes, and leaving a small water-mill on the right, fish the upper portion first. There are some pretty good pools here, containing very fair trout. After fishing this part of the river carefully, which will not take you long, pass down again and commence below the bridge. *En passant*, I may mention that this stream is fishable only with worm, as in some places it is thickly wooded, whilst in others almost inaccessible. The scenery, especially during spring, in the glen, is picturesque and beautiful in the extreme, primroses, wood hyacinths, ferns, etc., growing in great profusion on its banks. It will take you fully a couple of hours to fish as far as Port Soderick Bay. On your way down you will pass many capital little waterfalls, where perchance you may kill one or two small sea trout, especially if the river is swollen. During spring I have frequently killed sea trout fry, some quarter of a pound weight. But if you do happen to have poor sport, you will be fully repaid for your disappointment by the scenery. If your taste inclines to botany, you may track back "up the glen" to your starting-point, and fill your vasculum (which many anglers carry as well as a basket) with some very rare

TROUT FISHING IN THE ISLE OF MAN.

and interesting specimens. If not, when you arrive at the beach, you may pick up some very fine Manx pebbles; and after paying a visit to the cave on the right-hand side of the bay, together with the inn on the left, you may follow the stream back until you come to a small bridge, over which, as a matter of course, there is a road. Take the right-hand side, and follow it (crossing a small brook on the way) till you reach the top of the hill, where, on the right-hand side again, is a farmhouse called Ballashamrock,—well-known to all who are given to picnicking, *i.e.*, dining out. But *prenez garde*, which I should translate, "Beware of Dogs,"—keep the butt of your rod in hand by the small end whenever you approach a farmyard on the Island. This is not the "Isle of Dogs," as very few seem to be going to them here; but in a farmyard, as far as my experience carries me, they are very apt to come to you, and prevention, you know, is better than "hydrophobia;" therefore, *animus vester ego*, or rather the calf of your leg. I know this, that several times, on my approach to places of the above description here, I have almost wished that my calves would at once and without further notice go to grass, and leave me to weather the gale out under bare poles; although, between you and me, if they did so I pity the pasture, as from their appearance they must be ravenous (?). Have Manx farmers' dogs got an affinity for the *Calf of Man*? Then, if they have, by all means send them there, or tax them well. The proprietor, Mr Carey, I am certain, for his tenant's sake as well as his own, would prefer the latter. But to return to Ballashamrock, if you have forgotten your sandwiches, and thereby feel peckishly inclined, you can have the *summum bonum* of your wishes at the aforesaid farmhouse, in the shape of ham and new-laid eggs, oatcakes, tea with capital cream, in fact *omnium gatherum farmyardibus*; and may your motto be, "Rest, and be thankful." Do not forget the hostess! She will treat you well; but settle your *quid pro quo*; shoulder your basket, which I expect contains about two and a half dozen nice trout, and *walk* back to Douglas. And when the shades of evening have closed round all, you will be very glad, I know, "to draw around your wearied limbs the curtains of repose;" and if you have not indulged too freely in our late hostess's rich dairy produce, I feel confident in guaranteeing you that which many would wish to purchase at any price—"a good night's rest." I have tried the experiment repeatedly, and rarely have been disappointed.

Almost the whole of this stream is now preserved by the riparian owner, whose beautiful family seat of Crogga can be seen when approaching Port Soderick Station.—ED.

KIRK SANTON RIVER.

The whole appearance and character of this river differs widely from any other to which I have alluded. I shall endeavour to describe its appearance as I go on. The generality of anglers who fish this river more frequently commence at Ballaglonney Bridge, close to the station; and it depends entirely on the state of the river as to whether you start operations on the upper or lower waters. If the river is in good condition, begin about the bridge and fish up, with either fly or worm. You have a couple of miles at least of good water before you, and as it commences to narrow and fork off in different little branches, you will be compelled to use worm alone; and with this at this particular part you should do tolerable execution. I may as well mention that, on the road which crosses the stream before you reach the Mines, there is a small inn close at hand on your right, where you may obtain refreshment. From Ballaglonney Bridge there are several capital runs, and in going down you will pass some good-sized waterfalls, which at particular seasons of the year

are pretty certain to contain an averaged-sized sea trout. I know several gentlemen here who have killed them at this spot; in fact I myself got one in the largest of the waterfalls over a pound in weight, and a bright and plucky fish it was; but they have been got here several pounds' weight.

We now arrive at what is called the White Bridge, and if you have had sufficient sport, you may take the road on your left, which you must keep to the left, as it forks to the top of the hill, and go straight back to the station. If you have time—say two or three hours—go on fishing below the White Bridge. There is plenty of capital fly water from this to the sea, and during autumn a great chance for sea trout, especially if they would keep those abominable nets out of the river. I have seen them stretched across it here repeatedly; and, *à propos* of that, I may mention the following circumstance: the last time I fished from the bridge to the sea—*previously higher up I had had good sport*—the fish from some unaccountable reason ceased rising. I changed my flies, and tried on all sorts of dodges; but to no purpose. I had not gone on much further, however, before I met a man coming slowly up the banks, who afterwards turned out to be a farmer in the neighbourhood. I got into conversation with him, and told him my woes. The information he gave me convinced me at once that my tackle was not at fault in the least:—*He had netted the place on the previous week* with great success, and evidently looked upon my rod and line with the same derision that a sportsman looks upon a popgun. Oh! did I not feel my enthusiasm gradually taking its departure, and after a few disconsolate casts, I reeled up my line, bid my farmer friend a most mechanical and unceremonious good-bye, and walked back again, awfully disgusted. [The netting alluded to by Mr Tod is now almost a thing of the past. The bad old times of which he writes were before River Inspectors or Angling Associations were known.] Between the bridge and the sea on the left, and close to the river, is a farmhouse, where several times I have improved my sandwiches with some excellent milk, and just a *wee drop of the cratur in addition*. It is wonderful how liable we anglers are to wet feet; therefore, we are seldom without the remedy.

There are much deeper pools from opposite the aforesaid farmhouse than any on Douglas River, which contain some good trout and afford during the spawning season shelter for salmon and sea trout of much larger size than any which ascend that river. These, *I am confident in stating*, are poached in every possible way, and with far more success than on the Douglas River. The last half-mile or so before opening on the sea is very troublesome fishing-ground—large boulders covered with lichen lie in various places in the stream, whilst on either side of you the rocks rise perpendicularly to a considerable height; therefore an amount of scrambling and break-neck work must be looked for. I should advise those who can to try artificial minnow in some of the pools here. I have tried it on the Douglas River with success, killing eight above Tromode the first time I tried it—the largest being eight ounces, and none below a quarter of a pound. The Phantom Minnow is the best. Why should it not succeed here?

In conclusion, I have fished almost the whole of this river several times, but not more than the half of it on the same day, and have occasionally succeeded in getting some really good baskets, but my average take has been about two dozen and a half.

RIVER SILVER-BURN.

Ay! well-named Silver-burn. This, in the estimation of many, is one of the most enchanting streams on the Island, and the associa-

tions in connection with it, concerning the old Abbey, surrounded as it is on every side with varied landscapes of great rustic beauty, and other things of interest to the antiquarian, render it doubly so—but for information on this point *vide* Brown's Guide. And now to the text. I shall take you to the nearest route, and after showing you the best way to fish it, leave you to form your own opinion of the stream. The village from Ballasalla from Douglas is eight miles distance. The trains to Castletown all stop. There is a little inn, where you will probably go in and light your pipe, and prepare your tackle for the day's fishing. On leaving the inn, turn to your left: any person will show you the way to Rushen Abbey, which is close at hand, and past which the river flows. When you arrive at the bridge on the main road you will have the Abbey to your right, with a beautiful avenue of trees overhanging the river; whilst on your left it passes through green fields overhung with huge willows, underneath which are stretches of deep and smooth-running water. But let us halt at the bridge, and deliberate before we proceed further. On the left of the bridge, and from that as far as Castletown, you have about a mile and a half of good "fly" water with lots of good pools, and easy walking almost all the way. Let us go down: first put on your fly cast, fish the pool below the bridge, then cross the stepping stones below it to the left bank, and continue until you come to a fall a few hundred yards below. Then cross the stream to the right bank, which is easy walking, and fish to and from Castletown; but if you prefer worm fishing, on leaving Ballasalla, turn to your left and go straight on. You will shortly have three roads before you—take the one on your extreme right, and before you pass through the upper portion of the village, turn to your left at a right angle to the road. Crossing the mill-race, *which contains some good fish in many a cunning little nook and corner*, cross over the old stone bridge, which of course, will take you to the left bank of the river. There is a capital pool immediately above the bridge—in fact a sort of waterfall from the dam above. It generally contains some good trout; but go on, keep to the left, until you come to the junction of the two streams which form the main. The right hand branch comes from St. Mark's; the lower portion of it contains some good rocky pools, though of small size, whilst the upper part has the appearance of an ordinary mountain burn. This branch under ordinary circumstances will afford you good support for one rod—say three dozen or so—but it must be fished with worm alone.

But to return to the junction. As is generally the case where two streams meet, the formation of a good pool is the result. Fish it,—*that's advice gratis*,—but let us take the left branch, or main branch, and proceed. From this, as far as Torrance's Ochre Works is bothersome fishing, brambles, whins, etc., overhanging some of the best water; cross the stream at the ochre works the best way you can, and keep the right bank, fishing the while. You now come to another waterfall, similar in character to the one last mentioned. only somewhat larger; fish it carefully, and I have no doubt you will be repaid for your trouble. Immediately above there is a dam, which takes off part of the stream to the works. Always fish the mill-races; they generally contain good fish; and the little wooden plank bridges which are frequently thrown across them are pretty certain shelter for a heavy fish. Above this the river runs smoothly and gently through the belt of trees which overshadows it on either side, and, aided by a rippling breeze, you may fish this stretch with fly; and when the river is coloured spend some considerable time here with a worm. We now come to a stone bridge, above which there is a mill; cross the bridge to your left, *and look out for dogs*, Keep the left bank now, *but fish the mill-race first of all*. You have

some excellent pools and runs here until you arrive at a cluster of cottages on your left. You will have to cross the stream several times at this portion, which on either side is covered with brushwood of all sorts; but tear through until you come to another bridge, over which the high-road from Peel to Castletown passes (you can get back to Ballasalla from this by crossing the road to your left, and keeping to your left when you arrive at the four cross-roads, which are about one and a half miles from this); on crossing the bridge, and on the left of the stream, there is a private road leading down to a woollen manufactory. There are a few good pools from this to the factory, but they are rather difficult of access. The proprietor of the above place will, I am sure, furnish you with every information regarding the upper water; but, in case you do not meet him, I should go on. There is another of those what I should call mill-dam waterfalls here; cross the stepping-stones immediately below it to the right bank, and go on. You will, *after some bad walking*, shortly come to lots of splendid water, which continues for about half a mile or more, above which the river forks off into two branches. The left, or main branch, rises from the Round Table, on the left shoulder of South Barrule; while the right goes up in the direction of Foxdale. At this junction, *above which you will perceive a few cottages surrounded by trees on the LEFT BRANCH*, and if you feel disinclined to proceed further, strike up through the fields to your right at a right angle to the stream. You will then hit upon the high-road, where there is a sort of village; turn down to your right, and proceed to the bridge last mentioned; keep straight on till you come to the four cross-roads near Kirk Malew; then turn to the left, and you will shortly arrive at Ballasalla. But before doing this, I should advise you to fish the branch streams at the head of the river, and by doing so you will be certain to improve the appearance of your basket. Taking this stream with its branches, consider it is the best on this side of Douglas by a long way. This is not my own opinion merely, but the opinion of many gentlemen here who are better acquainted with it than I am.

GLEN RUSHEN AND DALBY RIVER.

I am now going to take you to the 'Far West' of the Isle of Man, "mongst moors and mosses many," and where you will meet some of the most primitive people on the Island. You might almost imagine yourself for the time as having been guided to the spot by one of the most powerful of Manx fairies, in order to give you in some measure an idea of "ye manners and ye customs of the ancient Manx;" but that is not *my* object. And now for a day's really genuine burn-fishing in the full acceptation of the word, the sort of day which to me recalls some of my boyhood's pleasantest memories. Prepare your tackle on the previous evening, which should consist of several spare gut casts of ordinary thickness, a small quantity of split shot, several average-sized round-bend bait-hooks, and also a good stock of well-scoured worms in a large flannel bag, full of fresh moss slightly damped. Take a companion with you if possible; order a car the previous evening to call for you at six or seven o'clock in the morning; and by all means take a driver, and, if you can, one who knows that side of the Island. It is thirteen miles to Glenmeay village—where you get off to commence your day's fishing. But first of all send your car on two miles farther, and tell the driver to put up at the farm-house Borraine, which is situated on the bank of the stream, and close to a small plantation. There are three roads before you on the top of the hill at the village: the right-hand road takes you past the newly erected village inn to Glenmeay Waterfall, which is well worth a

visit, the character and scenery round putting one something in mind of the river Esk and Hawthornden, near Roslin, concerning which Sigourney says,—

“ Down, down, precipitous and rude,
The rocks abruptly go ;
While through their deep and narrow gorge
Foams on the Esk below.
Yet though it plunges strong and bold,
Its murmurs meet the ear
Like fretful childhood's weak complaints,
Half-smother'd in its fear.”

Now, the river here has very just cause of complaint. All those splendid waterfalls contain no trout; in fact, the stream from the sea as far as the mines, which includes more than a mile of water, is rendered perfectly barren, on account of the poisonous nature of the lead-water which is allowed to pass into it from the mines. It is perhaps not unworthy of remark that, whenever a lead mine is opened on the banks of a stream, fishing on that stream (as long as the mine continues to be productive) is entirely at an end. Can nothing be done to prevent the wholesale destruction of one of the finest of fresh-water fish, viz., the trout, which on several rivers here has become totally extinct solely from this cause? But to return to the village: let us take the road to the left—which, by the way, is not a very good one—and go on until we come to the slate quarries; and when we get above the lead into clear water (we have been on the left of the river ever since leaving the village), put your rod together, bait your hook, and proceed. If variety in the shape and size of pools be charming, you will have it here. You will pass one or two large dams or sheets of water on your way up, over which you might have a cast with fly. You now come to a farm-house on the left of the stream. Farther still, above this, there is a small stone bridge, over which the mountain road passes: below this there is a very good pool, from which I once killed two fair trout. Above the bridge the river breaks off into two forks, both of which contain plenty of black mountain trout, the right being the main, besides being your guide to the Dalby stream. Follow it to its source, then turn and look behind you, and you will have a glimpse of very fair vale and mountain scenery. But turn again; keep straight from the source, as if you were still doing up the stream, and when you get to the top of the hill incline to your right; cross over a mountain road here, and go on for about three-quarters of a mile until you sight a glen, with very steep grassy banks, below you to the right. From the source of this, as far as the farm-house on the right, I have killed some of the best trout of the day, and more nobly marked fish I never killed on the Island. On we go, brushing through little belts of woods, wading through most beautifully grown ferns, until we come to the next farm-house, which is also on the right of the river, and close to a small stone bridge, with a plantation immediately below it. This is the farm-house where you should find your car put up. If you go into the kitchen, take notice of the old-fashioned fire place—you can sit round it and look up the chimney. Shall we step in here for some oat-cake and a glass of milk? No; leave that till afterwards, and let us go on as far as the sea, between which and this you should kill at least two dozen. It is very difficult fishing, especially through those belts of trehs, where, if you are addicted to striking hard, you are certain to come to grief by having your line fast in the branches overhead, with probably a trout attached, who will of course wriggle and wobble about in the branches till he makes matters worse, after which performance he generally drops off back into the stream again,

and you lose your cast, the fish, and last, though not least, your temper. In a place like this give them time to get the hook well into their mouths, and a very slight motion of the wrist will make all fast; then reel up and lift carefully and steadily. There are several considerable waterfalls close to the sea: be careful in approaching them—they are full of fish. I once killed two very good ones in the very last pool on the sea-shore.

Now, I shall tell you a ghost or buggane story in connection with this locality which was related to me by a man who was born in the neighbourhood; a story that, of course, is founded on facts—which, we are given to understand, are very stubborn things. In the first place, let me inform the uninitiated in these matters that a buggane, as far as I can make out, is an immense fairy or sprite, whose nocturnal rambles are subjects of great dread to numbers of the peasantry, and whose immense height, together with the total want of a head, makes him, to say the least, an ugly customer. It appears that several years ago there lived an individual of very intemperate habits in the village of Glenmeay. Trudging home from the inn, after his evening's debauch, he frequently met a buggane, and after such encounters you may be certain he would have something very wonderful to relate next day to his companions. At last he became notorious for his yarns in this respect. But now for the grand climax. Some man residing in Dalby, whose good lady was on the eve of her confinement, had to go one night to Glenmeay in a hurry for a midwife. He found her, and they both started to go back together to Dalby; but as she did not walk sufficiently fast to his liking, he, being a powerfully built fellow, made the following proposal, namely, that he should carry her the rest of the way—but how? That was quickly settled. The fair dame was quickly mounted on his shoulders, with a leg over each—in fact, on his neck *à la fourchette*; and away they went until something tumbling about in a whin-bush arrested their attention, which evidently amused the good woman on the howdah; however they passed on. Now, for the sequel. Next day the hero of our anecdote told one of his best buggane stories—how as he was going home on the previous evening he saw an immense buggane, about seven feet high; that he had to creep into a whin-bush to let it pass; and that, as it did so, it cackled, snuffled, and haw-hawed in an unearthly manner. The wonderful story soon reached the ears of the compound bugganes, who at once gave a very different description of the case. The parties in question knew the man, who they saw was intoxicated, tumbling about in the whin-bush, and the unearthly sounds which he heard were the hearty laughter of the good woman from her perch at his apparent fright and utter helplessness. I am further assured that since that he has never boasted of having seen another buggane.

In conclusion, and especially during a long day's fishing, let me urge upon you the necessity of carrying plenty of sandwiches and a flask (N.B. trespassers are not often prosecuted who carry the latter), and have a pair of dry shoes and stockings stowed away in the car, so that you can drive home in comfort after your day's sport.

PEEL AND GLEN HELEN RIVERS.

Peel River, about four years since, used to be as good a river for a day's fly-fishing as any within the same distance from Douglas, and many a nice basket of fish I have taken therefrom. But alas! since that, the lead demon has taken possession of the whole valley. Less than twenty years ago this river, at the fall of the year, used to be

full of sea trout. I am personally acquainted with a party of gentle men here who about that time went there together for the purpose of fishing it, and my informant assures me that in less than half an hour he killed five sea trout, averaging from two to five pounds each, with worm, and all out of one pool.

Now, this shows at once that the number of fish in the river at that time must have been very considerable; but, on the other hand, we must bear in mind that it is only on the occasion of great and successive floods that such quantities appear in small rivers like this, and only during the fall of the year.

Even now I am given to understand that a few stragglers, *i.e.*, sea trout, make their way through the lead water as far as Glen Helen; but the river must be flooded, and the poisonous character thereof considerably reduced by the additional body of water, to induce them to pass up. But let us leave Peel River; cease, in the mean time, "Marius like," mourning over its ruin, and pass up to the clear and pellucid waters of Glen Helen, where we can get some good fishing. But before going any further I must tell you where it is, and how to reach it. Any of the numerous trains to Peel will convey you to St. John's Station (the junction for the Northern line). Here you have your choice as to where you would like to strike the main river. It is most easily reached by taking the road to the right, and following it straight on, leaving Tynwald Hill on the right, after walking some three-quarters of a mile, you come upon the stream. Fishing, especially with fly, is excellent up to the Wool Mills. Here you come to that part of the river you would have reached by taking the other route, which is as follows:—When getting to Tynwald Hill, following the main road, through the village, and, after walking about half a mile, you arrive at Ballacraigne Inn. take the road to the left, which passes the gable end of the inn, and walk straight on for about half a mile, until you come to a stone bridge. On your left, and looking down the river, are the wool mills; whilst on your right, and looking up, is a very pretty wooded glen, with some cottages to the left. From this bridge, in going down, and as far as Peel River, more especially if the river is in order, will be found sufficient for one day's fishing. The upper portion, again, as far as Glen Helen Hotel and pleasure grounds, should be fished by your companion, if you have one with you. Or it can be reached by well-appointed busses which run during the summer months between the Hotel and Station. I have killed a nice dish of trout several times from the bridge as far as Peel River with fly. There are several mill-races on the way which might afford considerable sport to the worm fisher when the river is coloured. The last race empties itself into a capital pool, where I have frequently during the spring killed some good-sized yellow-fins, and from this as far as Peel River have generally had the best sport. The banks are covered with whins and brush-wood; so that in fishing with fly a certain amount of care will be found requisite. The nearest bridge to Peel River is the one over which the main road to Douglas passes. Take the road to your left, looking down the river, if you wish to return to St. John's or "Ballacraigne Inn:" if not, and if you have time, fish back to your starting-point—the road from which to the right takes you to Ballacraigne. The upper water from the bridge is excellent, provided there has been rain overnight. There are some long reaches of good fly water here, and at and above the mill on the left some good pools for either fly or worm. The scenery, beautifully wooded as it is on this upper reach, is too well known to every tourist to require description from me. Rhenass Waterfall, which is about a mile higher up, is well worth seeing. Excellent accommodation, and permission to fish, can be obtained at the hotel.

In conclusion, this river should afford you at least half a basketful under ordinary circumstances. Recently a resident angler here killed in one day on the upper reach nine dozen trout, but the river was in the very best condition at the time.

SPOOYT VANE AND LITTLE LONDON RIVERS

There are two ways of reaching these charming little rivers. The shorter, if more prosaic one, is to take the train to Kirk Michael Station; upon approaching which the line crosses two streams. The first, and best, is the Spooyt Vane—the one nearest is the Kirk Michael. Walking about a mile along the Kirk Michael and Peel main road, the stream is reached. The lower portion is in the hands of a Company, who have laid out extensive pleasure grounds. About half a mile further on "Spooyt Vane" is reached; to the lower portion of which the same remarks apply. The longer, but much pleasanter way, is to make up a party of two or three, as you have some distance to go ere you reach the ground, where you will at once have before you two of the best streams in the Island, and, if the water be at all coloured, more than a day's fishing in either. There are several ways of fishing the above places. For a party of two, I should recommend the following route: Start as early in the morning as you please; if at day break so much the better. Make a good breakfast—It will enable you to pull through the first part of the day until lunch time—and take plenty of 'grog' with you of all sorts: as to tackle, etc., take both fly and worm. Drive to Injebreck (seven miles from Douglas), where there is a capital hotel. You will now have about a mile and a half of a walk by the old road from this to the top of the hill, which is so steep that a loaded car seldom or ever attempts the ascent. On your way up you will pass through one or two mountain gates, and when you reach the top of the hill, keep on to the left until you come to the junction of another road on the left; take this road, it leads to Kirk Michael, whilst at its commencement you have the Little London River in the glen below you to the left. Let one or two of the number get off here and fish Little London and its numerous branches. Your other companion will then proceed to Kirk Michael, where he will have the horse put up at the inn, to feed and rest until the afternoon, when he should have orders to leave, and go on to the Hotel at Glen Helen, there to put up again and wait until ultimately the whole party arrive there with, I expect, heavy creels and light hearts.

There are one or two branches at the head of Little London—before you come to the farm-house, with its old conservatory—which are well worthy of the attention of the worm-fisher. After having fished them you arrive at a farm-house called Little London: below this, a little farther on, there is another branch stream, still to the left; and a capital one it is. Pass on again, and beyond this you may put on a fly cast and fish as far as the farm of Rhenass, in the neighbourhood of which you will find excellent fly pools. There is another considerable branch here to the left, which passes and joins the main river close to the farm, and which you should fish with worm. Passing on from this junction, there is some really capital fly water—deep rocky pools of considerable length; but the footing in some places is bad. Before you come to Rhenass Fall, which you cannot mistake, cross the river to the left and enter the plantation. You will meet with a footpath here which will take you down to the foot of the fall, on the left of which there is another tributary of some importance. It will occupy fully a couple hours to fish it; after which, and when you come to Rhenass Fall, put up your tackle, as the river below is preserved,

and walk on, keeping the right bank of the main river until you come to the Hotel, on the right of which is the main road; where you will be very glad to rest awhile, and where your car and companions are probably waiting for you. But let us go back to the Spooyt Vane, which the other party have fished, and of which I have not as yet given you a description. Leaving the inn at Kirk Michael, turn to the left, and walk on for a short distance until you have two roads before you: take the one to your right. You will shortly drop down into Glen Wyllan, through which a tolerable stream passes; but the fishing is much damaged here on account of some mineral and other water which is allowed to run into it. There is a small branch at its source, which contains some good trout; but you may pass this glen, and keep straight on for about half a mile, keeping the road to your right until you arrive at a stone bridge close to the sea, underneath which runs the Spooyt Vane stream. On the right of the road and above the sea-beach, close to a little mill, are some pools worthy of notice. The size of the stream, which is only fishable with worm, will, I dare say, somewhat disappoint you; but nevertheless it contains plenty of trout. You will have three or four miles of water before you. After leaving the bridge there are good pools for about half a mile up, until you come to the waterfall, or Spooyt Vane ("White Spout"), from which the river derives its name. The fall, in my estimation, is by far the highest in the Island, and it seems to me to be also the largest in the Island. After heavy rains I am certain it would well deserve attention. It is somewhat of the shape, though in miniature, of the famous Grey Mare's Tail (waterfall), near Moffat, in the south of Scotland. Above this there is plenty of regular burn fishing-places, where you have to poise your line well in letting it into the pool between twigs and rushes; but there are good trout in almost all those nooks. It is very troublesome fishing here, more particularly if there is much wind: to do so you will have to *shot* your line, in order to steady it in entering the pools. I remember, *à propos* of that, fishing a mountain stream in Scotland during a very high wind, when I had to place a regular junk of lead above the worm, in order to steady the line. To my astonishment, the fish seemed more attracted by the lead than by the intended lure, rising at it in the most determined manner. I profited by the hint, and put on immediately above the lead a large-sized black hackle, which did more execution that day than its lively contemporary; but, however, that was merely an experiment, or rather a *dodge* under extraordinary circumstances. But to return to our subject: when you are getting near the source you will perceive a large wheel; and workings above you. Walk across the fields to your left, and strike up for some farm-houses and a kirk, which are on the wayside; having gained which, proceed (to the right) straight on, until, after about two miles' walking, you arrive at the inn near Glen Helen. About ten years since, this stream was fished by a resident angler and his three sons: their take amounted to thirty-three dozen, all of them being good fish. There are few of the worm-fishing fraternity here who do not give this stream a good character.

BALLAUGH STREAM.

The village of Ballaugh, now easily reached by rail, through which this stream passes, is in a very central position for anglers who are bent on a week or a fortnight's fishing in the North of the Island, as the rivers Sulby, Little London Spooyt Vane, with a few minor streams in the locality, are all within easy walking distance. Those who are in the habit of staying for a few days' trout fishing, generally put up at an inn

but there are comfortable lodgings to be found in the neighbourhood for those who intend to stay for some time. The river here is entirely a worm stream, and suffers much by summer droughts, which I am told have great effect upon it; nevertheless, during rain, you may still have fair sport. If I intended visiting the Island on a fishing ramble, I should certainly make Ballaugh my head-quarters. The scenery in the neighbourhood is most beautiful. When you happen to be in the vicinity do not forget to pay a visit to Bishop's Court and the little dell close by, which is thickly wooded by large trees, which are covered with ivy to their very tops. The little stream passing through it should contain trout. A few different species of the fern attain an immense size here, and add much to the beauty of this secluded little spot.

SULBY GLEN AND RIVER.

This, without exception, is the most important and beautiful river on the Island. It passes through more than ten miles of country on its way to the sea; so from that you may easily form an idea of the time it would take you to give it a fair trial. If you really wish to fish Sulby River, you may as well make up your mind to stay for a week at Ramsey. The best flies for the lower portion of this river are red and black hackle, and a fly with a peacock herl wing, and dotteral spider—at least those are the flies that are most in favour with the anglers in the neighbourhood. The river from Ramsey, and until you get three miles further on, is a series of long, deep, and sluggish runs, with but little broken water; in fact, it is almost canal-like in its character, mud banks on either side, with willows, marsh, grass, etc., overhanging the water, which must, in some places be at least six or eight feet in depth, and which, at the same time, requires either a breeze or a coloured state of the river to make your success certain. Leaving the town, you pass over a stone bridge above the harbour, and go on the left until you shortly come to the junction of two roads; take the left, and presently, on your right, you will pass a windmill. Shortly after this you will get clear of the town, and on your right the country is flat—almost a dead level, intersected in every direction by fences surrounding small fields. But let us go on till we come to a lane on our left. This leads down to the river, at the foot of which there is a cottage: pass up the river to the plank bridge, and cross it to the left bank of the river: there are several excellent pools immediately above this, deep long runs, which continue until you come to the next plank; cross it, but be careful in doing so, as it is merely a single plank laid across from bank to bank, and very wobbly in the bargain, and a cold bath in a deep pool like this is not a very comfortable introduction to a day's fishing. About the same description of water continues as far as the next plank, which you cross again to the left bank. You now come to a few nice deep runs; a little further on you will pass a large pool or a basin, at the head of which there is a good run for fly. In this pool Mr Chas. Midwood, of Ramsey, who, by the way, was one of the most successful anglers on this side of the Island, tells me he was fortunate enough to hook and land a pure river trout which weighed four pounds and three-quarters. This is the heaviest trout I have ever heard of having been taken in any stream on the Island: it was killed with worm. He also informs me that he has frequently killed trout in this river about a pound and a half in weight. Passing this pool, and fishing as you proceed, you now arrive at another bridge or gangway: cross it. You pass a house close to this on your right: there are plenty of pools here, but the trees which overhang the river render the casting of a fly somewhat difficult. Cross the next bridge to the opposite bank:

you have now a cluster of houses to your left. The river here runs rather shallow, but shortly you will pass a mill-race which enters it (the water of which is taken from it above). I should advise you to fish this race, as it must contain some capital trout, besides which it is of considerable length, and in dry weather takes almost all the water from the river. You will in the next place come to the weir or dam in connection with it, the pool above which is excellent: on a clear still day I have seen more trout in it than in any pool in the Island; and a gentleman in the neighbourhood tells me that he has known a basketful to have been taken repeatedly from it alone, with worms, after heavy rains. From what I myself have seen, I can easily credit this statement. We have now Sulby Bridge before us. Standing on the bridge and looking up the river, the road to the left takes us to Ginger Hall Inn, about three minutes' walk, and to Ramsey about four and a half miles; whilst the road to the right passing through Sulby village, leads, as you are aware, to Ballaugh, Kirk Michael, Peel, etc. On the left of the bridge, and in the foreground of the landscape, you cannot help noticing a somewhat peculiarly-shaped hill, called Primrose Hill; it is almost exactly similar in shape to a well-known hill near Edinburgh, called Arthur's Seat, which gives one the idea of some immense animal lying down with its head erect. Above Sulby Bridge there is another mill-race, which passes by the bridge on the right of the river, and which also contains good trout. Above the weir, and on the right of the river, is the farm of Ballabrooie; above that again a woollen manufactory, and still further on a starch manufactory. The water in this neighbourhood is really good. On leaving the works you cross a little stream which enters the river to the right; but which is not of much consequence. Keep the right bank for about two miles up, during which time you should have some excellent fly-fishing. You now come to a small stream which enters the river to the left, called Brockary; it contains plenty of good trout, but must be fished with worm. Keeping the main, you may fish with either worm or fly, until you arrive at the farm on the hill-side to your right, called Airey-Kelley: there is another stream to the left here, of considerable length, but fishable only with worm. The river and its branches at Airey-Kelley are visited frequently by some of the keenest of our worm-fishing fraternity, and can be reached from Douglas in the same manner as that described for Spooyt Vane and Little London, with this exception, that when you arrive at the top of Injebreck Hill you take the valley below you to your right for Airey Kelly, the left for Little London, etc. The character of the stream below Airey Kelly is bold and rugged in the extreme, the banks on either side being covered in the greatest profusion with ferns of different kinds. You will meet with several waterfalls in the vicinity, of extreme beauty and great depth. The water in these places seems of a greenish blue, like bottle glass; and if you are careful in approaching them, you will have the pleasure of seeing some splendid trout playing on the surface. But remember this, if they catch a glimpse of you, even for an instant, the most tempting fly or worm will not induce them to move: so that when you hit upon one of these large pools I should advise you to *circumvent* it; that is to say get below it, keeping well out of sight, and throw a long line up towards the fall. If you can manage this judiciously, you will be fully paid for your trouble and caution. When the river is low and clear, with a bright sun overhead, it is only by extreme care, and by using all manner of artifices, that you can catch this finny weasel napping in places of the above description. I have never had an artificial minnow with me here, but feel confident that a practised hand might use it to great advantage, and rob the large

pools of some of those bright spotted chieftains who have reigned for some years their sole monarchs of the pools. I have heard of a good basket having been taken here with live blue-bottle flies, so that the trout in this stream must be fond of what we try to avoid in the artificial fly—"a regular buzzer."

KENNA AND ITS TRIBUTARIES.

Kenna River was, until lately, one of the best trout streams on this side of the Island; but the main stream has been almost entirely destroyed by the lead-water from the mines of North Laxey, which for some time has had free access to its waters: its tributaries, however, are deserving of notice. These streams are situated about half-way between Laxey and Ramsey. On our way from the former we pass a little glen called the Dhoon, into which runs a small stream (near the sea) named the Nulligs: the latter, I believe, contains some fair trout; but I should not get out to try it, save for experiment. I have heard of five or six dozen being taken from it with worm; but from its extent I should hardly give it credit for containing that amount *in toto*. The next stream we come to, after passing this and taking the old road to the right, is the first of the tributaries of the Kenna, or main stream. You get off at the bridge, where there is a cluster of cottages, which the natives call *Le Ya Ya*—that is the sound of the word, at least. It is generally understood that one has a licence in the spelling of proper names; but when they are in the Manx language a special licence should be granted. From the bridge and village the stream is not of very much consequence, although the pools as far as the wooden bridge are tolerably good. From below the bridge the stream assumes a new feature. Keep the right bank. You have now a succession of pools before you, and good ones too; but as you get farther on, the footing begins to get desperately bad; the banks are boggy, steep, and slippery; whilst the pools beneath you are so good that it would almost seem as if they were placed there for the purpose of inducing you to break your neck in trying to reach them for the sake of fish which you feel confident are Brobdignagian in their proportions. After having fished for about half a mile, you come to a wood which continues on either bank of the stream, till its junction with the main. The pools, a series of capital deep waterfalls, which pass through it, are all that could be desired by the most fastidious bait fisher. The old Latin proverb concerning easy descent to the infernal regions is a truism, and the descent to those pools is just as easy, provided you make up your mind to go in for a dive, which you could not well complete without coming into violent contact with trees, brambles, etc., on your way, and finishing the experiment by fracturing some part of your anatomical structure on the rocks which are prepared to receive you in the pool beneath. It is all very jolly to make fun of this sort of fishing. A friend of mine in commencing his day's fishing got the following advice from the man who farms the land above this portion of the river, which was at once interrogatory and advisable:—"Have you ever fished this river before, sir?" "No!" said he, "are there good fish in it?" "Yes!" replied the farmer, "capital fish! but you should insure your life before you proceed further." But, joking aside, this is the most uncomestable little river in the Island; but it is to be fished, and contains good fish too, and in quantity. I have known several here who have taken pains to fish it, and have been rewarded with great success, but they have used caution in doing so. We now, after having fished upwards of two miles of water, arrive at the junction of the above branch with the main stream—KENNA. The less I say concerning the fishing here the

better; but during spring there are a few 'yellow fins' to be caught near the sea. There is one large rocky pool which at that season contains a good number of them. The valley on either side of you here is richly wooded. But let us pass on to the next branch, which is about a mile above. In the first instance, we arrive at the village of Ballaglass, which is so well and justly noted for its beauty, that on this subject I shall not enter into details, although at the same time I should recommend you to go a short way up the main stream and have a look at the waterfalls, which are well worth seeing. You need scarcely trouble yourself to fish the main stream, as the former sport is almost entirely done away with by the North Laxey Mines, which at present are, to the angler, disgustingly prolific. The pool below Ballaglass Bridge is called by the natives here Spooyt Vane, but I am quite at a loss to find a reason for calling it so, as the name and place are by no means analogous. Not far above the bridge and mill you will hit upon another branch of the river, which joins it to the right as you go up; there are some excellent pools at the lower portion, and higher up (above the next mill) it assumes the character of ditch, full of pools and runs. After you have followed its course for about a mile, you will at once notice a road to the right of the river which passes over a stone bridge not far from its source, but continue fishing above this; and when you come to a dead stand for want of water and fish, retrace your steps to the bridge before mentioned, and turn to the road to your right, which, after a few minutes' walking, will bring you to the Inn, where I expect your car will be put up. From the stream last-mentioned, especially after a night's rain, you should have an excellent dish of trout. Both the before-mentioned tributaries of the Kenna River, especially if you happen to get them in order, must yield you excellent sport, but they must be fished with worm alone. Let us, before we proceed further, put up our tackle, tie up our rods, throw off our heavy creels, and pass into the little parlour of the Inn, and while our car is getting ready we shall feel very thankful to "mine host" for a draught of *Manx bitter beer*. There are some wonderful works of art in this little parlour: paintings on glass representing ships in full sail scudding over the most extraordinary representation of a sea, The ship which I used to purchase in my boyish days as *warranted to swim*, having been placed on a parcel of broken bottle glass, lathered with soap-suds in lieu of foam, to represent the raging sea, might have served as an excellent model from which to paint the above extremely pre-Raphaelite productions.

LAXEY GLEN.

EMBRACING GLEN ROY, SNAEFELL, AND CREIG NEISH GLENS.

Laxey Glen is distant eight miles from Douglas. The ten o'clock coach which leaves Douglas for Ramsey will leave you at Laxey shortly after eleven; but I should advise you to be on the ground, by walking or otherwise, long ere that. There are several branch streams here, in conjunction with the main, which contain (more or less) a certain quantity of trout: but there are only two of the main branches which I have confidence in recommending.

Glen Roy River, of the two, is by far the best stream. It contains a good body of water, and has more pools and tributaries than Snaefell stream, and the scenery is much more beautiful. To fish Glen Roy you must not commence operations until you get above the weir which takes off the water to drive the large mill at the foot of the glen. You will pass a rifle butt on your way to the weir, and now that you have reached it, commence at once with a fly. There is some very fair fly water from this for about

a mile higher up, when the stream begins to alter its character. The scenery and appearance of the river at this particular spot remind me forcibly of Glen Helen, below Rhenass Waterfall. When you come to the first tributary which enters the river to your left, you may at once change your tackle, and resort to your worm-bag; but keep the main river, and cross to the right bank. You will now have some splendid deep and rocky waterfalls, with good runs for upwards of a mile, in fact until you get to the next tributary. Trees overhang the water in every direction, and taking the place altogether, you will find it rather difficult fishing. Flocks of people during the summer come down to Laxey solely for the purpose of seeing the Great Water-wheel. I should strongly recommend them during their stay to visit this particular part of Glen Roy, which, as far as my humble judgment carries me, is by far the most beautiful spot in any of the glens which surround the neighbourhood of Laxey: it is only about half-an-hour's walk from the village. But to return to my subject. In fishing this and the upper portion of the stream, you must make up your mind to cross the river frequently; that is to say, if you wish to fish it properly, Wet feet seldom do much harm as long as you keep moving, and a dry pair of shoes and stockings, put on when you get back to your hotel, will make matters still more secure.

The next branch we come to enters the stream from the left, and one of some importance; but let us keep to the main. We meet again with more wood on the banks of the stream, and good pools besides, though of course not so large as those to which I have just alluded. You will shortly pass a wooden trough, or sluice, to your right, above which again there is some good water. Still farther on a small wooden bridge passes over the stream: above this you have fully a mile of regular mountain-burn fishing. If the river is in order, you should get a black yellow bellied fellow out of almost every other pool.

And now having fished upwards of four miles of water, cross over to the right, and, keeping to the right, pass over the shoulder of the mountain for Snaefell Glen and stream. You will pass a little glen, on your way across, which you must not mistake for Snaefell: the latter is about a mile and a half from Glen Roy. I do not think much of the stream which runs through Snaefell Glen, for although you have plenty of water before you, in most places it runs thin and straggling, and here and there it occasionally makes a few very futile attempts at getting up a pool; nevertheless, after rain you should have fair sport here, though the trout are generally small. The glen itself is very pretty, yet even in this respect not all to be compared with Glen Roy.

Creig Neish Glen is the next in importance. It is situated immediately above the Great Wheel, and is a couple of miles in length. There are some capital pools in it; but the footing is bad, and the trout are rather scarce; those you do get, however, are generally good. The *Osmunda regalis* grows in great luxuriance; in fact, in most of the glens about Laxey it is exceedingly plentiful. You will find it, as well as other ferns, growing to an enormous size here, especially in shelved situations. I may conclude by strongly advising you to go to Laxey for a day's fishing—to Glen Roy in particular, as you have several miles of as good water, for the size of the stream, as you can meet with on the Island. It contains good trout and plenty of them; but try, if possible, to be there during or after rain. It would be preposterous to advise you to go to small rivers of this description during a dry season, as when the river is low every trout in the pool, unless you approach with great caution, must see you, and a general alarm is the result, which makes your best attempt useless. I know

several men who can, even under such circumstances, manage to kill a fair basket of trout; but they, of course, have a thorough knowledge of the habits of the fish, and use the very finest description of tackle in accomplishing their object; in fact, they are consummate anglers, in every sense of the word.

Another and very pleasant way of reaching Laxey, from either Douglas or Ramsey, is by the Mona Steamship Company's Manx Fairy or Minnow. These steamers run twice a day during the summer months between Douglas and Ramsey, calling at Laxey and the Dhoon; passage about half-an-hour to Laxey, from Ramsey, about the same.

BIBALOE, OR WHITE BRIDGE RIVER.

This stream, situated close to Kirk Onchan, is about two miles from Douglas. The best and most expeditious way of finding it, is to walk to the village of Onchan; take the road on your right, which passes the church, then turn to your left and go on until you find yourself at Groudle Bay. From the church, as far as this, you will have the glen below you on your left as a guide all the way. The glen through which the stream passes should be much more celebrated for the beauty of its scenery than for the sport it affords the angler. It is, I think, the prettiest and most romantic little glen within easy walking distance of Douglas, especially when the gorse which covers the banks on both sides is in full bloom. And talking of gorse reminds me of sticks. I have cut and dressed some very handsome gorse sticks from the covers in this glen; indeed, Bibaloe Glen is well-known to the stickologists on this side of the Island. But, as usual, I am wandering from my subject. You will probably commence fishing opposite a small flour-mill close to the bay. Fish up, with worm, and be prepared for rough walking. About half a mile or so above this the river divides into separate branches—the left being the main. The right-hand contains some grand pools, and even better trout, but for a very short distance. After that it becomes inaccessible, and it requires a plucky fellow to fish the lower portion. The banks (save the mark!) are almost perpendicular, with the *Osmunda regalis* on either side in great luxuriance. I once brought home from this spot a specimen of the common bracken, measuring seven feet four inches in height. But let us keep to the main. Shortly after leaving the junction, we find ourselves amongst a chain of rocky pools and waterfalls. If you are fond of scenery, even though not a trout-fisher, pay this little spot a visit by all means: you will not regret it. As far as this I have frequently killed a dozen or so of averaged-sized trout.

We now enter a plantation through which the river passes, and where there are good pools. On getting into the fields again the river assumes a different character, running in shallow streams, with a few pools intervening here and there, until you come to the White Bridge. Cross the road to the upper side of the bridge, and fish up till you arrive at the Wellington Mills, which are about a quarter of a mile higher up. Take the right bank of the stream, and go on until you arrive at the Douglas Waterworks Reservoir. Above this again there is good water. About a mile above the beforementioned village the river falls off right and left, both branches being small mountain streams. Taking this river or burn altogether, it is very troublesome fishing, but, by sheer dint of perseverance and hard work, I have sometimes been able to kill two and three dozen trout in a day—some of very fair size. The Douglas Water Works reservoir referred to has now been displaced and rendered useless by the formation of a very extensive one some miles further up the stream. This contains some magnificent fish; and well

managed, would prove a fruitful source of revenue, if so judiciously stocked and treated as Lake Vyrnwy has since it became the chief source of the water supply of Liverpool. The late directors cared nothing for fishing; but as the whole of the Water Works Company's property has now become the property of the Town Commissioners, for a sum of £144,000, it is trusted a more enlightened policy may be pursued.

And now, kind reader, adieu for the present. But let me add, in conclusion, that I feel a certain amount of satisfaction in being your pioneer, as well as the author of the first Guide to the various trout streams in this beautiful Island. I may still further assure you that more than one-half of the visitors who come here to do the Island know literally nothing of its scenery in comparison with the humblest angler who trudges on foot at early morn to each sequestered glen. The lark sings gaily above his head; the murmur of the brook is to him a sweet unison of sounds; as he baits his hook, or loops on his fly cast, at the first pool he comes to, even the graceful fern from the opposite bank seems to acknowledge his presence, as with outstretched fronds it bows a dumb welcome to him through the medium of the morning breeze; and when on the point of leaving the spot, after wetting his line, he may do worse than acknowledge the greeting of his dumb friend, whom he will be happy to see still flourishing in the same spot, still bowing the same dumb welcome with which it first greeted him, when he revisits the glen at some future period, in pursuit of the most innocent and health-giving of all recreations, a day's trout fishing.

S.M.T.

By an Act of Tynwald, recently passed, anglers must obtain licences, which can be procured at the Postoffices of Douglas, Peel, and Castletown, and at Mr Kelly's, Market-place, Ramsey:—Licences for the whole season for salmon, &c., twenty shillings; licence for a whole season for trout alone, seven shillings and sixpence; licence for one week, two and sixpence.



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