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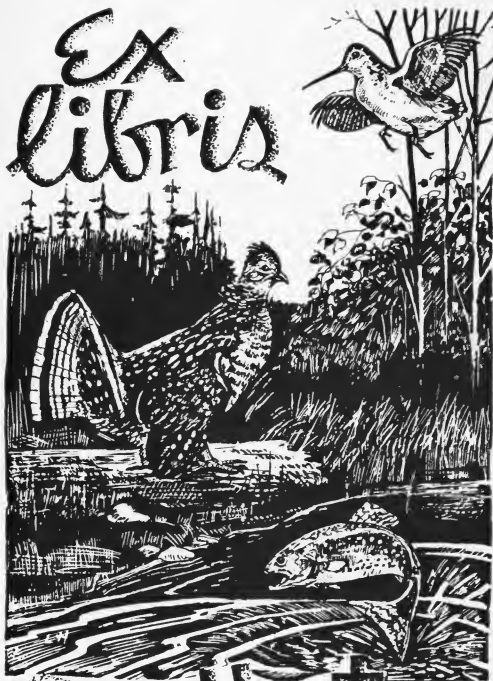
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NOTE.

IT will be seen from the following pages, that in regard to the theory and practice of Artificial fly-making and fishing the Author has arrived at conclusions very different to those usually accepted by anglers and angling writers ; but fishermen who, in spite of preconceived views and the venerable sanction of the fathers of the gentle craft, have the courage and patience to test for themselves the results of these conclusions fairly and thoroughly, and to adopt them if they are satisfied of their soundness, will find their reward in the increased weight of their baskets, and the diminution of trouble and expense.

On this point a reviewer in "Baily's Monthly Magazine" observes :—

"The result of Mr. Pennell's teaching is 'the substitution of six typical flies—three for salmon and grilse, and three for trout, grayling, &c.—for the whole of the artificial flies now used.' This is indeed a 'revolutionary measure,' and one in which every fly-fisher is directly and personally interested ; for who would not be glad to dispense if he could, once and

for all, with the cumbrous assortment of furs, silks, and feathers with which the orthodox practice now loads his tackle-box, and the thousand-and-one patterns of flies enjoined by tackle-makers and angling writers as necessary for each variety of fish, river, and season? To the disciples of Mr. Pennell's school this will be all changed. His three typical trout-flies, which are new both in principle and construction, can be made, he assures us, by the merest tyro; and both these and the salmon-flies—dressed, of course, of different sizes—will readily stow away, with the materials for making them, in the compass of an ordinary bait-box. The 'glorious uncertainty' as to 'which is the right fly,' and the loss of precious time in experimental changes, are also obviated under Mr. Pennell's system, which we look forward with great interest to testing by the river-side on the first opportunity. The prospect seems almost too tempting to be realized; but it cannot be denied that the author's theories and conclusions are the legitimate deductions from an argument logically and even severely worked out; and we can hardly conceive that Mr. Pennell, whose 'fame is on many waters,' would peril his reputation by putting forward in so deliberate a manner theories which he had not himself thoroughly tested in practice."

FLY-FISHING.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

THE SYSTEM OF ARTIFICIAL FLIES.

ENGLISHMEN are as a race decidedly conservative in their habits, and very slow to move out of the beaten track—phlegmatic is the term used by their continental critics—and I shall be sorry if anything I am about to write should give offence to this in many respects excellent instinct. Conservatism, however, in the largest sense of the term implies contentment with what is ; and if that were my condition in regard to the theory and practice of Angling, and especially of fly-fishing, this book would certainly not have been written. The measures which I am about to submit to the general parliament of anglers are decidedly radical—revolutionary would not be too strong a term,—for they aim at revolutionizing the fundamental principles of the fly-fisher's "constitution"

—the very alpha and omega of his craft—I mean the system of artificial flies.

Trout fly-fishers may nowadays be divided roughly into two parties, which may be described as the “colourists,” or those who think “colour” everything and “form” nothing; and the “formalists,” or “entomologists” as they have been sometimes termed, who hold, with the late Mr. Ronalds, that the natural flies actually on the water at any given time should be exactly imitated by the artificial fly used, down to the most minute particulars of form and tinting. The latter class includes probably the very great majority of anglers—both apostles and disciples—who have in most cases imbibed their opinions almost unconsciously and without ever questioning their soundness. The “colourists” are still but a section, though an increasing one, of the general fly-fishing community, and are represented by a few enterprising spirits in advance not only of their age, but also, as I believe, of the truth. The theories of both I hold to be distinctly unsound; and if my reader will follow me in the next few pages, calling to mind also his own fly-fishing experiences, I have little doubt that he will arrive at a similar conclusion. In fact, the ar-

guments of the two schools are mutually destructive.

The position of the "formalists" is as follows:—

"Trout," they say, "take artificial flies only because they in some sort resemble the natural flies which they are in the habit of seeing; if this be not so, and if *colour* is the only point of importance, why does not the 'colourist' fish with a bunch of feathers tied on the hook promiscuously? why adhere to the form of the natural fly at all? Evidently because it is found, as a matter of fact, that such a bunch of feathers will not kill; in other words, *because the fish do take the artificial for the natural insect*. If this be so, it follows that the more minutely the artificial imitates the natural fly, the better it will kill; and also, by a legitimate deduction, that the imitation of the fly on the water at any given time is that which the fish will take best."

To the above argument the "colourists" reply:—

"Your theory supposes that Trout can detect the nicest shades of distinction between species of flies which in a summer's afternoon may be numbered actually by hundreds, thus crediting them with an amount of entomological knowledge which even a professed naturalist, to say nothing of the angler himself, very rarely possesses; whilst at the same time you draw your flies up and across stream in a way in which no natural insect is ever seen, not only adding to the impossibility

of discriminating between different species, but often rendering it difficult for the fish even to identify the flies as flies. The only thing a fish can distinguish under these circumstances, besides the size of a fly, is its colour. We therefore regard form as a matter of comparative indifference, and colour as all-important."

Now in each of the above arguments there is a part that is sound and a part that is fallacious ; and it is from the failure in distinguishing the true from the false, that what I believe to be the erroneous practice of both these opposite parties springs. Each argument, however, is sound so far as to be an "unanswerable answer" to the other : for it is clear—as stated by the "formalists"—that colour is *not* everything in a fly, because if it were, a bunch of coloured feathers tied on anyhow to the hook would kill as well as an artificial fly, whereas by their practice the colourists themselves admit that such is not the case ; on the other hand, the argument of the "colourists," that *from the way the artificial fly is presented to the fish* it is impossible they can distinguish *minutiæ* of form and imitation, equally commends itself to common sense and common experience. This is the point, in fact, in which the entomological theory entirely breaks down. Because Trout take

the artificial for the natural fly, the formalists argue that the one should be an exact counterpart of the other, ignoring the fact that *the two insects are offered to the fish under entirely different conditions*. The artificial fly is presented under water instead of on the surface; wet instead of dry; and in brisk motion up, down, or across stream, instead of passively floating. No doubt if the flies could always be kept dry and passively floating—that is, as they are seen in nature—the exact imitation theory would (though only up to a certain point) be sound enough; but as in practice this is impossible, we are perforce driven to artificial expedients to extricate us from the “unnatural” dilemma. Thus at the very outset we find ourselves compelled to simulate life instead of death in our flies; and for this purpose impart to them a wholly unnatural motion whilst swimming: again, because “fluffy” materials when wetted lose much of their strength of colour, fly bodies are constantly made of hard silk instead of soft dubbings; and as it is found that a naturally proportioned insect is deficient in “movement,” an unnatural quantity of legs (hackles) are added to it—in the smaller species the wings being often omitted entirely. In short, we are launched upon

an altogether artificial system, in which experience to a great extent supersedes nature as a pilot.

The colourists take advantage of this undeniable position to assail the whole system of "form" as a blunder, and in doing so themselves make a blunder still greater; they not only draw from correct premises an erroneous conclusion, but they draw a conclusion the very opposite of the logical one. For if it be admitted (*a*), that Trout do take the artificial for the natural fly, and (*b*), that from the way in which the fly must be presented to them it is difficult to be recognised; the logical deduction is, not that form is of no consequence, but on the contrary that it is of the utmost consequence, and that the fly should be as "fly-like" and characteristic as possible, so that, notwithstanding its rapid and unnatural movements, *it may be at once and unmistakably identified as a fly.*

I do not see any escape from this position, which if accepted, puts the colourists as entirely "out of court" as by the previous argument are the formalists.

The superadded theory of the latter, that the imitation of the natural fly on the water at any given time is that which the fish will take best,

falls as a logical sequence with the proposition on which it was based. As might be expected, this theory was never found to stand the test of practice, the experience of every fly-fisher teaching him that when a particular natural fly is on the water in abundance, Trout will commonly take better an artificial fly imitative of any other species. To this principle there is only one exception—namely, the case of “May-fly fishing with the dry fly.” In this case, owing to the large size of the fly, it is possible to really simulate nature by presenting the artificial insect literally *dry, and floating passively*. Thus the exception proves the rule.

Mr. Stewart, who has written one of the most able books of modern times on Trout fishing in clear water, founding on the same sound proposition as Mr. Ronalds—viz., that Trout take the artificial for the natural fly—argues that because the natural *dry* fly usually floats passively down the stream, the artificial fly—*wet*—should do the same. This is another analogical fallacy, the error of which would seem hardly to require an almost universally opposite practice for its demonstration. Ninety-nine men out of a hundred find

it best to give a slight movement to the fly in the water.

I fear we must include in the same "unproven" category, and for the same practical reason, the theory that flies should usually be cast up stream, rather than down.

To sum up, therefore, the foregoing arguments, the true *rationale* of the matter seems to me to be as follows :—

1. Whatever Salmon, *et hoc genus*, may do, Trout certainly take the artificial for the natural fly.

2. But as the artificial fly is necessarily presented in an abnormal condition—namely, wet instead of dry, sunk instead of floating ; and as the resemblance which wet feathers and silk under water bear to dry insect-down, fluff, and wings on the water, is imperfect,—(3) it is necessary for the purpose of hiding the counterfeit, and partly also to hide the hook, to give the fly an unnatural, life-like movement in the water ; adding to it also an unnatural quantity of legs (hackles) which open and shut, and move with the movements of the fly.

4. These "movements" and alterations, however,

make it quite impossible for Trout to discriminate minutely between the various unnatural imitations of natural flies, whether in form or tint ; (5) and render it doubly important that the imitation insect should be as characteristic and “fly-like” as possible in shape, lest the fish should fail to perceive the resemblance altogether.

6. *General shape, general colour, and size*, are all that can be distinguished by the fish. These are the points, therefore, to be kept in view in the construction of artificial Trout-flies.

The next step is to reduce these propositions to practice ; and the argument naturally takes somewhat the following form :—If when presented to them in the only manner in which we can present them, nice varieties of imitations, and shades of shape and colour cannot be distinguished by Trout, the great mass of flies now used are obviously unnecessary, and where either the colour or outline is confused, are mischievous. It would be better on every ground to select two or three of the most favourite and distinctive families of flies, and imitate them only ; not in their varieties, or even species, but, as it were, in their types—and using those colours only which represent the prevailing

tints in the selected families. What, then, are the most favourite families of flies—most favourite, that is, in the eyes of the Trout? Without question the *Ephemeridæ* and *Phryganidæ*,—and for a very good reason, as with hardly an exception they are all bred in the beds, banks, and reeds of the waters over which they afterwards fly. To the first-named family belong, roughly speaking, the whole collection of the “duns,” and “spinners”—the drakes or May-flies, the dark mackerel, the sand-fly, and the March brown; whilst the latter includes the cinnamon, the grannom or green-fly, the willow-fly, and, more important than any, the stone-fly, or “water cricket,” which in the early part of the year is so plentiful on many rivers. From these two great families, in fact, some of which are on the water every day of the year, fully three-fourths of the contents of most fly-books will be found to consist; they therefore commend themselves as the families from which our typical flies should be made.

As regards form or shape no question can arise, as the selected families are all unmistakably and characteristically *flies*, in the proper sense of the term, having wings, legs, and, I think without an exception, “whisks,” or hair-like appendages at the

tail. These whisks are not only very "fly-like" and distinctive features, but are also easily imitated, and assist materially to disguise the hook, *as well as to make the fly swim straight*. This last is an important point, as the effect of the extra weight at the bend of the hook, unless counteracted by some additional "float," is to make the fly swim tail downwards.

The great majority of the most favourite river flies belong to the order *Neuroptera*, or nerve-winged insects, the wings of which, being filmy and transparent, *cannot be really imitated by feathers or by any other available material*. Wings are therefore merely an encumbrance to the artificial Trout-fly, and should be entirely rejected.

The next point is Colour. On examining the fresh caught *ephemeridæ* and *phryganidæ* (for those in entomologists' collections are generally faded) it will be found, in the first place, that there is almost always a general similarity in colour, though not in the exact tint, between the wings and the bodies and legs, and that the colours which predominate—indeed almost monopolize—are greens, yellows, and browns. Our typical flies should evidently, therefore, be of these colours.

Moreover the colours of the bodies of the ordinarily imitated flies made of silk, dubbing, &c., generally change their colours when wet, and thus lose another important item of the exact imitation; whilst as a rule they always lack the glossy, semi-transparent appearance of the real insects. To the question of colour I have accordingly devoted a large share of attention, and the three typical flies which are hereinafter described are new both in principle and detail. They will be found to give the real colours strongly and unmistakably, and in a form which makes any discoloration on wetting impossible.

Size, a most important point in artificial flies, demands the next consideration. As we have no longer imitations of individual species, size is a matter of no moment as regards the flies themselves, though of the utmost consequence in another point of view. And this is one of the greatest advantages which those who may act on the principles here advocated will reap. For nothing is more certain than that some waters—usually large ones, whether rivers or lakes—require large flies; whilst small ones, almost equally universally, have to be fished with small flies. This necessity cannot be ignored by the “formalists” any

more than by the "colourists," and the result, as regards the former, is that they are obliged frequently to use a fly professing to be an exact imitation of the March brown, for example, and having no other advantages but such supposed resemblance, which is only about half, or a third even, of the natural size! This one fact, which is undeniable, is of itself almost a sufficient refutation of the "exact imitation" theory.

Under my system, in which the flies are typical and not specific imitations, the size can always be adapted to the size of the water, without any loss of imitativeness.

The foregoing observations, of course, fully hold good as applied to Grayling; and the three flies referred to will be found, taking the season through, to kill more fish than the many varieties now generally used.

This then is, in my belief, the true theory of artificial Trout-flies; not by any means as I originally conceived it—for first theoretical conceptions are almost always more or less crude and imperfect—but the theory as ultimately elaborated, examined by the light of the theories of others, and worked out, tested and re-tested by myself during many years' practical experience of fly-

fishing on many of the principal rivers and lakes in the three kingdoms.

With regard to Salmon-fishing the arguments adduced against a multiplicity of flies apply, and with even greater force, inasmuch as it is not pretended by any one that Salmon-flies really imitate the colour or form of any known insects, but are rather spontaneous evolvments from the internal consciousness of anglers and tackle makers. They are certainly more numerous in their endless variety of colour and pattern than even Trout-flies, and are proportionately more useless, except to those who are paid for making or selling them. The result of my investigations is, that there is only one essential in the construction both of Salmon and Grilse-flies, and that is *brilliancy and strength of colouring*; and that in proportion as they fulfil these conditions are their killing properties. Size is on the contrary an element constantly varying from local circumstances. A large river or lake usually demands a large fly, and *vice versá*, and this again should be larger or smaller according as the weather is dark or bright, windy or calm. These are all points requiring the exercise of judgment, for in their combinations they

present considerable variety ; but the essentials of the flies themselves never vary. Nor is the *rationale* of this difficult to understand. The Salmon admittedly does not take the fly for any living insect, or food which he can have previously met with. Then for what and why does he take it? *For its beauty and tempting appearance.* Probably it has an appetizing effect like that of a rosy-cheeked apple on a school-boy.

In the remarks on Salmon-fishing I have given three patterns of Salmon-flies which combine the real essentials as above described, in what my experience leads me to believe to be the most perfect form.

White or sea Trout, and their congeners, appear in their tastes, and habits of feeding, to be somewhat intermediate between Salmon and brown Trout ; and the Trout-flies described, with a slight addition of tinsel, will kill them, both in still and running water, better than any others with which I am acquainted.

It will thus be seen that I propose to substitute six typical flies—three for Salmon and Grilse,

and three for Trout, Grayling, &c.—for the whole of the artificial flies now used.

That there are a great number of existing patterns of flies for each different kind of fish, most anglers are probably aware, but perhaps few have any very distinct notion of what the number really is. In a small collection of my own, consisting of so-called "standard" flies only, and those for Salmon and brown Trout alone, I find there are 121 distinct patterns, or "species." But these are a mere drop in the ocean. Besides Salmon and Trout-flies proper, there are the endless varieties of flies for Grilse, Salmon-Trout, Bull-Trout, Grayling, &c., the general total having been estimated by a recent writer at more than one thousand patterns. In fact, their name is simply "legion." With most, if not all, fish may no doubt occasionally be killed, and with some, excellent baskets made; but yet, painful as the admission must be to the accomplished student of angling entomology, and fiercely as it will be contested by many a gallant veteran of the old *régime*, it is nevertheless true that nine-tenths—or rather ninety-nine hundredths—of these graceful combinations of furs, silks, and feathers represent so much wasted time, money, and ingenuity.

BROWN TROUT.

ARTIFICIAL FLY-FISHING IN RIVERS AND LAKES.

IN thus placing Trout-fishing before Salmon-fishing, I invert the usual order of sequence. I do so deliberately, because, both as a sport, and as indisputably the most popular branch of angling, it seems to me to be entitled to precedence. With no assistance but his rod and no guide but experience, the Trout-fisher wanders down the bank of the untried lake or stream, selecting by intuitive perception the most likely casts, and if he raises a heavy fish has many a heart-quake and many a moment of breathless suspense, before he transfers the shining beauty to his creel. No Salmon-fisher, on the contrary, however skilful, can select for himself the places where he ought to fish, Salmon apparently being guided by the merest caprice in the choice of location, so that the very stone behind which the fly must fall to give a chance of success, has often to be pointed out by the local assistant ; whilst the tackle used is so strong, and generally the nature of Salmon casts so open, that with ordinary skill a fish once fairly hooked has little chance of breaking away. The chief glory

of Salmon-fishing lies in the "rise"—which is certainly magnificent—and the only difficulty of the capture, as a rule, consists in the "stroke." So much is this the case, that I have known veteran Salmon-fishers, who, when Salmon were plentiful, made it a habit to resign the rod into the hands of an assistant after checking the first rush or two. But who ever heard of the Trout-fisher adopting such a practice? Not that I blame the Salmon-fisher; for though I never could bring myself to follow in this respect the example of men who were doubtless better anglers than myself, yet it must be confessed that there have been moments when I felt sorely tempted to do so. Wielding an 18- or 20-foot rod for five or six hours consecutively is apt to tire even the strongest muscles; and as I have said, as a rule, the cream of the sport is over when the fish is fairly struck, and his first wild rush or two met and mastered. Still Salmon-fishing is a gallant game, fit for the persevering spirits and strong arms that play it; and it has, too, its gleams of triumph and excitement, the more intensely bright perhaps partly from their very shortness.

But to return to the first part of my subject,—

RIVER FLY-FISHING.

There has been much excellent writing devoted to describing How, When, and Where to fish for Trout in rivers and streams; and this is one reason—want of space; another—why I shall not go very minutely into those questions. It seems doubtful also whether anglers, as a rule, read, or if they read, remember so as to derive practical benefit from the detailed maxims and rules laid down on these subjects.

With regard to particular states of the atmosphere, for instance, some writers think the presence of ozone in a greater or a less proportion may probably make one day more favourable than another for fly-fishing. But what then? Nine men out of ten fish just the same, and make the best basket they can, whether they know, or think they know, the day to be good or bad; whilst as to “Where” to fish in any particular river, the only really available knowledge is to be gained by experience, and the most general instructions are all that can be given or recollected.

Again, as regards the “How.” The proper movement of a fly-rod is very difficult to de-

scribe intelligibly, and I advise all tyros who do not understand the art to get a lesson from some one who does. I can only attempt to give an outline, which may facilitate the acquirement of details.

HOW TO FISH.

CASTING.

The flies and some of the line being in the water, and the rod held by one or both hands (in the latter case the right hand being above the left), the rod should be raised rapidly yet steadily, with a backward motion over the right shoulder, *so as to fling the line well out behind into the air*; and then brought with a circular sweep round the head to the left, and propelled lightly forward, with force proportioned to the length of cast to be made. A short line will of course be best for the first essay. The shape of the curve described by the rod in casting is nearly that of a horse-shoe. In completing this movement the point of the rod must not be allowed to approach too near the water, but should be kept well up; and even, at the moment the line is falling, a little upward springy movement of the point should be given. This has the effect of making the flies light

softly, and before the line—two most important points.

As soon as the flies have touched the water, the rod should be gradually raised towards the perpendicular, the flies being kept in motion by gentle upward movements of the rod point

Each cast will of course be only a repetition of the above process ; but as skill is acquired, the fly-fisher will soon learn to cast the flies either over the right or left shoulder with one or both hands, and from any position.

“Switching” is another most useful method of casting, as by it water otherwise inaccessible, owing to trees or banks, can often be fished satisfactorily.

The *modus operandi* is as follows :—

By raising the rod to the full stretch of the arms the flies are drawn in until they are nearly below the angler’s feet. Then with a very sudden, strong, circling movement of the rod they should be cast straight out again, up, down, or across, and the first process repeated. “Switching” requires practice, but it is well worth the trouble of learning.

As a rule the best mode of fishing rivers is to cast *down and across* the current, beginning under

the further bank if possible, and ending under the near one. In spite of Mr. Stewart's able advocacy, most anglers have now arrived at the conclusion that fly-fishing *up stream*, always, or even generally, is a mistake in practice. In my general observations on fly-fishing I have pointed out one or two of the reasons which led me to consider it so in theory also. With a strong wind up stream it is sometimes a necessity, though, even then, I cannot but think an unfortunate one.

WORKING THE DROPPER.

Some angling authorities recommend the use of three flies, and some even four.

The objections to this practice are many; but perhaps the most important are, that it is more difficult, especially in windy weather, to cast three than two flies; that it is more difficult to work them properly when they have been cast; and that when fish have been hooked there is more danger of entanglement in weeds, &c. Vexations, in short, are multiplied and efficiency impaired. The fact is that only one dropper *can* be properly worked, the perfect working of a drop-fly consisting in its skipping, or "dribbling" along the surface of the water amongst the ripples, and thus

offering a sort of imperfect representation of a half-drowned insect endeavouring to rise from the water. Cross lines and others are more killing than any other form of fly-fishing, only because all their flies work in this manner. The point, however, is more important in lakes than in streams.

TROUT DROP-FLIES.

There are several ways recommended by angling authors for attaching the drop-fly to the casting-line, but most that I am acquainted with fail either in neatness or in strength, and all in rapidity. By one method, for instance, the drop-fly can be properly attached only when the casting-line itself is made ; by another, the knots of the casting-line have to be pulled asunder at the point of junction, and so on. My plan is as follows : Take the casting-line in the left hand a little above the intended point of junction, thick end upwards ; then take the drop-fly, and with the same hand hold it along the casting-line, the fly end upwards ; then, with the other end, make a knot round the casting-line, in the form shown in the engraving ; draw it tight, and push it down on to the next knot of the casting-line below.

This knot, which in practice is the simplest

possible, may perhaps be called a "double half-knot." The only difference between it and the ordinary single half-knot is, that after the gut has

FIG. 1.

First step in tying knot (enlarged).



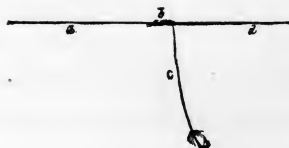
FIG. 2.

Appearance of knot before drawing tight (enlarged).



FIG. 3.

Knot as complete (actual size).



been passed once round the main line, and through itself, it is *passed round the line once more, and through the same loop again*, before being drawn close.

The preliminary configurations of the knot are shown in figs. 1 and 2 in an enlarged form.

Fig. 3 is a facsimile of the actual knot when finished, as tied with fine gut.

KNOT FOR FASTENING REEL LINES TO CASTING LINES, &c.

An engraving of the simplest knot for this purpose is annexed, and the mode of tying it will probably be better understood from the diagram than from a verbal description. In the case of stiff or dressed lines the small terminal knot on the reel line can be omitted with perfect safety. This knot has the advantage of being both tied and untied with great ease and rapidity.



STRIKING AND PLAYING.

After striking, *which cannot be done too rapidly*, the point of the rod should be kept well up, and a steady though yielding pressure brought to bear on the fish, until he is killed. With a proper check reel, it is better when playing a fish, to remove the hand altogether from the line, so as to allow of its yielding freely to any sudden springs or rushes.

WHEN TO FISH.

1. Some rivers and lakes are early and some late, whilst there are a few, like the Devonshire "Otter," in which it is said the Trout rise best in a snow-storm. This of course is a very exceptional case ; but, taking the ordinary run of early and late waters, there are few months of the year from early spring to late autumn in which the Trout-fisher cannot find sport somewhere or other.

2. In all Trout fly-fishing, whether on lake or river, a moderate, rippling breeze and a chequered sky are great advantages ; principally, doubtless, because they help to conceal the counterfeit fly, and lessen the glitter of the gut.

3. A bright sun, a dead calm, or water that is very low and clear, are always bad, for the converse reasons.

4. Water that is *thickened* by rain or other cause is always bad. It prevents the fish seeing the flies on the top, and brings down with it a quantity of ground-food which fixes their attention on the bottom.

5. The rise that precedes, and the fall that follows a flood *when the water has cleared*, are

generally favourable, more particularly after drought.

6. The presence of any large quantity of natural flies on the water is usually exceedingly bad.

7. About sunrise and sunset are commonly the two best hours of the day in hot weather, as the fish are then on the *look-out* for the flies, which oftener come out at those hours than at any other. In cold stormy weather, however, the converse rule often holds good.

8. As settled weather is very favourable, so changeable weather generally prognosticates uncertain sport.

WHERE TO FISH.

The best places to fish in any river are usually not where there are most fish, but where they can be most easily caught. These places are moderately rapid runs ; scours, or "stickles," where the water is of a medium depth, and carries a brisk ripple or curl ; pools with a sharp current through them ; and mill-tails, weirs, and eddies.

Deep, stagnant, lagoon-like reaches can only be fished with success when there is a good breezy ripple on them.

TROUT-FLIES.

TYPICAL FLIES : DRESSING OF.

I HAVE explained in the preliminary observations the reasons which lead, I think inevitably, to the conclusion that for all practical purposes only a few typical flies, of the most common insect-colours and distinctive forms, are required for Trout-fishing, whether in lake or stream.

Such flies it has been further shown should naturally embrace the three most common insect colours,—green, brown, and yellow ; and in form imitate the *phryganidæ* and *ephemeridæ*, which are the most favourite families of river flies, and the most distinctive and “fly-like” in their form. Several other *desiderata* with regard to colour, &c., have also been pointed out.

It will be seen that these conditions are fulfilled in the three flies, yellow, brown, and green, of which a detailed description is appended. They can be made of any size, from that used in the smallest and clearest of our Derbyshire streams to the largest sized lake-fly : nothing being required to be varied but the size of the hook, the

length of the hackle, and the thickness of the silk with which the fly is tied. These flies are both simple in construction, and more easily and quickly tied than any flies hitherto made public, so far as I am aware, *only a single strand of coloured silk, and a single hackle feather is used*; and the other flies are made in the same way. The principle of their construction is as follows:—

A strand of common coloured *sewing silk* (not floss), of the required thickness having been waxed in the manner presently described, take two or three turns over the *end* of the hook-shank and gut; lay the hackle on the back of the hook, hollow side upwards, with the large end *towards the hook bend*; lap over it with three or four turns of the silk; spin the hackle on over these turns (*the same way round as the silk*), leaving some of the hackle over; then fasten the hackle off with the silk, continuing to work upwards towards the bend of the hook, and *lapping over the hackle* until the body is of sufficient length; then fasten off the silk and cut *the stem (only)* of the hackle almost close to the end of the lapping, so as to leave the fibres in a V-shaped form to represent the *whisks*. By leaving and lapping over the stem of the hackle and the end of the silk, or by “stripping” the former and cutting the latter off close, the body can be made thick or thin as desired.

It will thus be seen that the body of the fly is made of the same strand of silk with which the gut is tied on, and that the "whisk" is made of the same feather that forms the legs, or hackle. A fly thus constructed cannot break until the hackle or body silk is actually worn through, and will last twice as long as one made on the ordinary plan, where the hackle, wings, &c., are constantly coming undone at the head. The saving in time in tying a fly (say a March brown) thus, as compared with the common method, is about 400 per cent.; which I have proved by having frequently tied the fly on my plan complete in forty-five seconds, whilst in the ordinary method it cannot be tied by even a professional hand under three minutes. The whole process is, moreover, so exceedingly simple that a single lesson ought to be sufficient to impart it to the merest tyro.

The difficulty which gave me the most trouble to overcome was the body-silk. In order to use this for whipping on the hook, &c., it was of course necessary to wax it; but I found that the ordinary "cobbler's" wax quite destroyed the colouring of the yellows and greens. It was also necessary in

some way to dress the silk with a waterproof coating to obviate the loss of colour to which flies tied with undressed body-silk are subject. The yellows particularly lose in this manner. After a good many experiments I hit upon a colourless wax, which fulfils both these conditions, and is moreover more convenient to manipulate than the ordinary cobbler's wax, which in cold weather becomes brittle and "chippy." A receipt for the colourless wax is appended:—

Receipt for Colourless Wax.—Burgundy pitch, 120 grains ($\frac{1}{4}$ of an oz.) ; white resin, 60 grains ; tallow, 20 grains. Having reduced the resin and pitch to a mixed powder and placed them in some clean receptacle (an egg-cup will be found very convenient), put them into an oven, and when quite melted add the tallow, stirring the whole thoroughly up together for several minutes. The wax, which when cold will be quite hard, will be ready for use in about twelve hours. The above quantities will make a lump of wax as large as a walnut.

The wax should be kept perfectly free from dust and dirt, and in using it for dressing the yellow flies, it is very desirable that the

fingers of the tyer should also be quite clean.*

For the body-silk of the brown fly the colourless wax over brown silk does not answer entirely, as the tint given by the brown silk is rather dead and "unfly-like." I find, however, that by waxing *very dark orange* silk with ordinary cobbler's wax an excellent rich colour is obtained. The silk *whilst fresh waxed* should be drawn tightly between the finger and thumb; by this means the wax is almost removed from two sides of the silk, and massed on the other two sides, producing a mottled yellowy-brown appearance in the fly somewhat like that seen in the March brown and other principal brown varieties, as the stone-fly, great and lesser red spinner, dark mackerel, &c., which are mottled with yellow or orange ribbings. The yellow and orange flies, on the contrary, as the cinnamon, yellow sally, fern, sand, and cow-dung fly, are all either plain yellows or oranges, or if ribbed at all are ribbed with different tints of the same colours. The oak-fly is an exception.

With regard to the heads of flies, these can, on

* The composition kept by chemists for making diachylon plaister might *very likely* answer well,—either simply, or mixed with the above preparation : but I cannot say positively that it will do so.

the above principle of tying, be made almost microscopic without any sacrifice of strength ; but I advise the angler, notwithstanding, to dress them large. The heads of Trout-flies are usually made much too small—much smaller, that is, than they are in nature, and smaller therefore than is desirable ; because it should be the aim of the fly-tyer rather to exaggerate than to diminish in the artificial imitation all the prominent features of the natural insect, so that on a quick glimpse the resemblance may be unmistakable. This last observation applies also to the “whisks” or tails, in exaggerating which there is an additional advantage, inasmuch as the larger the whisk the better and straighter will the fly swim.

The following is the formulary for the three typical flies described :—

—	HACKLE, FOR BOTH LEGS AND WHISK.	BODY.
1. “Green”	<i>Very</i> dark green	Dark green sewing silk, lightly waxed with colourless wax.
2. “Brown”	“Fiery” or cinnamon brown (not “claret”) brown	Dark orange sewing silk, well waxed with cobbler’s wax, and then drawn tightly between the finger and thumb.
3. “Yellow”	Darkish “golden olive”	“Golden yellow” sewing silk, lightly waxed with colourless wax.

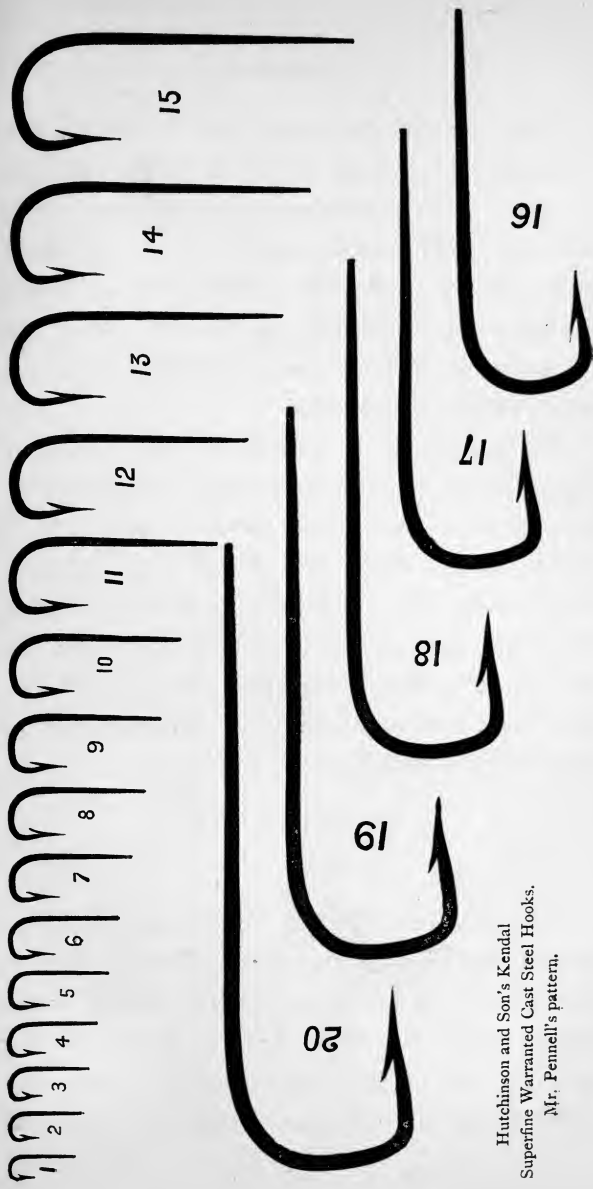
Floss silk will not answer at all for dressing these flies, as it loses all glossiness and strength of colour. For convenience in tying them several different thicknesses of sewing silk are requisite, from ordinary sewing silk—which is of the proper thickness for small flies—to silk of about the substance of holland thread, which is the size most suitable for lake flies.

All flies should be carried in a box, instead of being pressed together in a book, a process which robs them of half their elasticity and play of hackle, and to which they should never be subjected even for a moment. This is a most important point. Tackle makers think that the fly regains its full elasticity as soon as it is wet, but I have convinced myself by repeated practical experiments that this is not the case.

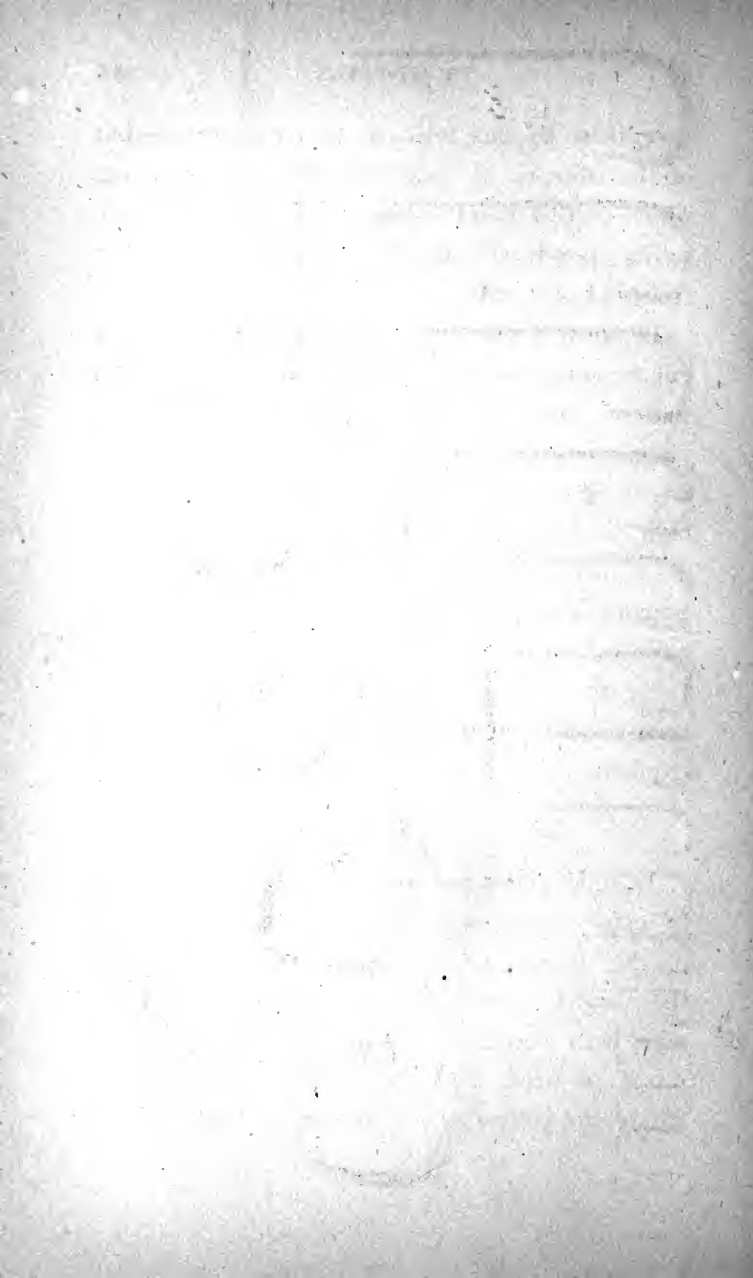
SELECTION OF FLIES.

SIZE.

It is a curious fact, but nevertheless an indisputable one, that the size of the flies to be used in any given river or lake generally depends, within certain limits, not upon the size of the fish, but upon the size of the water, modified by the condition of the wind and sun. There are occasional



Hutchinson and Son's Kendal
Superfine Warranted Cast Steel Hooks,
Mr. Pennell's pattern.



exceptions to this rule—as to most others—but in the absence of local knowledge or guidance, which on this point is often useful, the fisherman acting upon it will find himself right in nineteen cases out of twenty.

In most Trout *streams*, properly so called, in either portion of the United Kingdom, the best sizes of hooks are Nos. 2, 3, or 4 on the annexed plate, a larger or smaller size being used as the day is more or less dark or windy, or the water high or low. In the Derbyshire streams, No. 1 or 2 will generally be found the best sizes. Smaller hooks are sold in the tackle shops, but I have not included them in my patterns because I regard them as practically useless, No. 1 being small enough for every purpose usually required.

COLOUR.

In small rivers and streams, where it is necessary to employ very small flies, I recommend the use of the “green,” as the tail-fly, or stretcher; and the “brown,” as the bob-fly, or dropper to begin with, both of course dressed to suit the size of the water: if either fly does not appear to kill, substitute the yellow *as the dropper*, and the best of

the other two for the stretcher ; in larger waters the same flies of a larger size.

In deep lagoon-like reaches of river water, with a breeze on them, and especially in Scotland or Ireland, I recommend commencing with the "yellow" as the dropper, and the "green" as the stretcher. If either of these flies does not kill substitute the "brown."

Local Anglers will probably, and that almost without an exception, tell the fly-fisher that no flies but local ones are of any use on their lakes or streams, but this opinion is usually based on a very slender experience, limited most likely to that gained on some half a dozen lakes or rivers in their own neighbourhood.

Local prejudices are, however, by no means confined to professional fishermen. Even first-rate amateur performers are often imbued with the notion that no flies but those they have been accustomed to consider the correct thing on particular rivers and streams will kill in them. I remember once fishing the most famous Trouting loch in Scotland, in company with two of her most celebrated (and justly celebrated) anglers, and when I showed them the flies I meant to use, they assured me that they "would never kill fish

in Loch Leven!" At the end of the first day, however, my basket, which included seven Trout weighing 14 lbs., was found to be heavier than both theirs. This result I attribute of course solely to the flies, not, be it well understood, to the fisherman.

I will not go so far as to say that there may not be exceptional occasions—or even exceptional rivers—on which some local pattern of fly may not prove more killing than the three flies I recommend; but I am quite satisfied that taking the average of waters and weathers, and the great saving of time in the avoidance of experimental changings of flies, my patterns—which have been tested frequently against the best local flies on half the principal Trouting waters in the British Islands—will kill more fish in the course of the year than any others at present generally known.

FLY-RODS, LINES, HOOKS, &C.

As regards fly-rods it is difficult to give any opinion upon a matter which is so much one of taste, and dependent to a great extent on the strength and height of the individual angler. As far as my experience goes, a twelve-foot rod inclined rather to stiffness than to pliancy, will be

found the most generally efficient weapon. It is also convenient to have a hollow butt, so that one or two shorter tops—one for minnow-spinning, and one for worm-fishing—may be carried in it. A square ring of india-rubber slipped half-way down the butt will throw off the rain-drippings, which would otherwise run down the rod on to the angler's hands and sleeves.

REEL LINES FOR FLY-FISHING.

During the last few years it has become a not uncommon custom amongst fly-fishers to use for the fly the ordinary 8-plait dressed silk line formerly almost exclusively confined to trolling purposes ; and in windy weather the extra weight of such a line as compared with its bulk is an unquestionable advantage. Perhaps, however, the dressed line has made most converts owing to the equally unquestionable shortcomings of the mixed silk and hair line which was commonly the alternative. Nothing can well be worse than this line. It is expensive ; wears out quickly ; is never really strong even when new ; "kinks" on the slightest provocation, and, owing to the protrusion of numberless points of hair, has a special inaptitude for running freely through rod-rings. For

these reasons no one who values pocket or comfort should use a silk and hair line, whether twisted or plaited. Until recently I have myself for some years used the dressed silk line, and found it at any rate strong and smooth-running—two great advantages, it must be admitted,—but within the last few years a new description of line made of spun cotton has been manufactured by the Manchester Twine-spinning Company, which whilst inexpensive as compared with the dressed silk line, is equally strong and more durable. This line is what is termed “cable-laid”—twisted, that is, in the same manner as a ship’s cable,—the principle of which is that whilst the cable itself is twisted, say from right to left, the separate ropes of which it is composed are twisted from left to right. The result of this is that the two twists counteract each other in their mutual inclination to kink, and when wetted the cable instead of swelling hardens and contracts. The spun-cotton lines are made on the same principle, of sizes to suit all sorts of fish, including Salmon, and answer perfectly both for fly-fishing and ordinary bottom fishing.

They are not dressed in any way, but are stained a good neutral, or slate colour. Specimens

have also been sent me of the same lines dressed in various ways with india-rubber and tar for purposes of trolling. Neither of the dressings, however, properly effect their object ; and if they did, would still be useless, as in a single day's spinning the whole of the dressing wears off. The Company, however, informed me that they were about, at my suggestion, to try experiments with oil dressings, with what result I have not yet heard.

GUT-LINES.

Gut lines are preferable for every description of bottom and fly-fishing, and, especially in the latter case, it is important that they should be carefully and evenly tapered from top to bottom. The three chief points to be looked to in selecting silk-worm gut, are *roundness, evenness of substance,* and above all *transparency* ; and in the case of very fine gut, to seeing that it has not been scraped, or artificially fined down in any way. Gut so treated is what is termed "*drawn-gut.*" Its appearance is not so glossy as the natural material, and it frays and wears out almost directly when exposed to moisture and friction of any sort. Exceedingly fine, round, natural gut is, of course,

somewhat expensive, and not always to be obtained without some trouble, but it is essential in many kinds of fishing, and will in the end be found really much more economical than gut artificially fined.

STAINING GUT.

Stained or clouded gut is much to be preferred to gut unstained, because it is less visible in the water. Different fishermen affect different stains, some preferring what is termed the "red-water stain," others a neutral or slate tint, and others a blue. The most important point in the staining of gut is to remove the gloss, which catches the light, and on a sunny day glitters through the water in a manner that must produce no little astonishment among the fish, and which would probably equally astonish the angler himself could he obtain a bird's-eye, or rather fish's-eye, view of his line.

In this cardinal point, however, all the ordinary stains used by the tackle makers signally fail; the tints of colour produced being moreover by no means the best obtainable. It is to be remembered that the fish sees the gut usually from below, and that therefore, especially in fly-fishing,

the colour of the *water* hardly affects the question. A colour which without being glossy will assimilate best with the sky-tint for the time being is that which would be theoretically perfect if obtainable, but as the sky-tints change perpetually, dark alternating with light, and sun with shade, so as to make it impossible in practice to keep the colours actually matched, the next best thing is to employ a colour which harmonizes best with the largest number of the most commonly prevailing cloud-tints. This colour appears to be a sort of greyish-green, but I have never met with any single stain which will produce it. It seems to require the blending of several separate tints, and that may probably be the secret of the success of the following receipt, for which I was originally indebted to my friend Mr. W. C. Stewart :—

The first step in the process is to impart to the gut a lightish tint of the common "red-water stain." For this purpose take a teacupful of black tea, and boil it with a quart of water : keeping the gut steeped in the mixture until it has acquired the necessary tint. This process will sometimes take only half an hour or even less, and sometimes several hours, according to the strength and staining power of the tea : when sufficiently stained, rinse the gut well in cold water. When dry, take a handful of logwood-chips (obtainable at most druggists), and boil them in a quart of water till the latter is reduced to about a pint. Then take it off the fire, and put into it a small piece of copperas (sulphate of copper), about the size of a hazel nut, powdered, stir the

mixture, and when the copperas is dissolved, which it will be in a few minutes, dip the gut into the mixture until it has got the dirty greyish-green tinge described. Very often a few instants' immersion will be sufficient, and in order to ascertain the exact amount of the stain, as well as to avoid overstaining, it is best always to keep a basin of water close at hand to rinse the gut in, the moment it is taken out of the dye.

This method of staining involves a little extra trouble, but it is trouble well bestowed, and will tell on the baskets. The removal of the gloss is I think due to the action of the copperas. Every description of gut used in fishing should be stained in this manner.

To produce the common stains already mentioned :—

Red-water stain.—Use tea-leaves as above described : or coffee, previously charred in a frying-pan and ground, will answer instead of tea.

Walnut juice is said to produce a similar colour, but as I have never tried it, I cannot speak from experience.

Slate stain.—Soak the gut in a mixture of boiling water and ink, rinsing it well when stained.

All gut stains can be reduced in intensity by soaking the gut in clean boiling water.

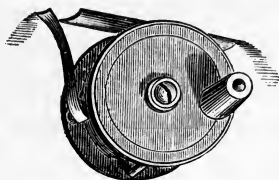
Elsewhere I have offered detailed observations on the subject of reels, &c. It may suffice in the

present essay to say that for all the purposes of the fly-fisher the ordinary plain *check* reel is in every respect the best, and that of all materials of which they are made brass stained black is the most convenient and serviceable.

Within the last few years a considerable improvement has been introduced into the form of reels generally, by the substitution of narrow grooves and deep side-plates for the old-fashioned shallow-plated, broad-grooved winches. The advantages thus gained are increased speed and power; speed, inasmuch as the diameter of the axle on which the line is wound is enlarged; and power, because the handle being further from the axle a greater leverage is obtained. Whilst speaking of handles, I would here most strongly recommend those attached to the side-plate of the reel itself, without any crank, as they obviate the constant catching of the line which takes place with handles of the ordinary shape.

One serious drawback, and so far as my experience goes, one only, is common to every reel hitherto made; namely, that the line is apt to get caught or hitched under the posterior curve of the reel itself, thus involving a constant trifling annoyance, and in the case of trolling and Salmon

fishing, a serious danger. To obviate it I have had a small spring attached to the last of the lateral girders or supports, and so arranged that when the reel is in its place the spring presses



closely on the wood or fittings behind. This spring, of which a diagram is annexed, is very inexpensive, and can be attached with ease to any properly made reel, and I venture to think that no troller or fly-fisher who has once found the practical convenience of such an antidote to "hitching" will ever use a reel without it.

FISHING WITH THE DRY-FLY (ARTIFICIAL).

The object of the dry-fly is evident from its name—it is made to float dry on the water like the natural insect, thus affording the solitary instance of the "formalist" or entomological theory being carried to its legitimate result. The peculiarities in the construction of the fly to enable it to fulfil this *rôle*, are first its wings, which generally consist of the whole tops of feathers (mallard,

generally), set nearly back to back, and pointing upwards and outwards; and secondly, its body, which is composed almost entirely of materials unabsorbent of water, such as mohair and hackles.

The method of using the dry-fly on the Stour and a few other rivers, where its use is best understood, is very peculiar. A large fish, say, is known to inhabit some particular hole or eddy. The spot is watched by the angler until he sees the fish rising, and then the fly is cast so as to fall a foot or two above him, and allowed to float (dry) passively over him. On the fly becoming wet, which happens after every cast, it is dried by being rapidly thrown to and fro, or "spread" in the air, when it is ready for another cast; but this is seldom made until the rise of a fish is seen, or his haunt known. Some fishermen who use the dry-fly consider it is not properly dried without a little crack or "flick" taking place at the end of the spread; but this "flick," though doubtless very artistic, often whips off the fly. A stiff rod with a tolerably pliant top is the best for the purpose. The dry-fly being presented to the fish in the same way as the natural fly, is most killing when the particular natural fly imitated (which is commonly the May-fly) is on the water. Smaller flies are

made, but it is found difficult in practice to "float" them ; and, indeed, the whole process is cumbersome, and is only worth practising on rivers where the fish are very large and wary, or cannot be taken in any other way.

LAKE FLY-FISHING.

Almost all the remarks already made on the principles of river Trout-fishing both as to the "How" and the "When," apply also to Trout-fishing in lakes. The case is different, however, as regards the "Where," and on this point a few observations may be offered.

The best spots for fly-fishing in lakes are usually outfalls of streams, rocky patches and banks, the edges of reed-beds, and generally the sloping shores at the point where, without being shallow, *the water is not too deep for the bottom to be seen.* The use of a boat is commonly a great advantage in lake fishing, as by its means not only can a greater range of water be fished, but it can be fished in a much shorter time. Moreover, such spots as the margins of reed-beds, and submerged banks, which are as stated usually amongst the best casts, can rarely be commanded from the shore, even with wading—a practice, by the way,

which in lakes is apt to lead to awkward results, unless pursued with great care.

The boat should be allowed to drift before the wind, the flies being cast out in front and at the bow and stern, according to speed.

A ripple on the water is almost a *sine quâ non* in lake-fishing, and a good curling breeze an advantage. When the water has been quite calm, however, I have sometimes caught fish by throwing the flies into the centre of the circle caused by a "rise."

SELECTION OF FLIES.

SIZE.

The considerations which regulate the size of flies to be used on any given lake are in many respects similar to those given under the head of River Fishing ; and on this point the opinion of a local practitioner may usually be taken with advantage. Loch flies, however, as a rule, are considerably larger than those applicable to streams ; the sizes most commonly used varying from No. 7 to No. 10.

COLOUR.

For some reason which I have not succeeded in fathoming, the Yellow fly always seems to kill best

in the position of dropper, or bob-fly, and the Green when employed as the stretcher, or tail-fly. The Brown can be used in either position ; but I have found it best, especially on new waters, to try the Yellow and Green first, reserving the Brown as a change in case of necessity ; a necessity, however, which very seldom arises.

For lake fishing a light double-handed rod from 14 to 16 feet long will be found most convenient, as, whether the angler is fishing from the shore or the boat, it enables him to work his flies better than a shorter rod, and to command a greater reach of water.

FISHING WITH NATURAL FLIES.

“ CREEPER ” AND STONE-FLY FISHING.

Creeper and stone-fly fishing is confined to the Border and Lowland Scotch rivers ; at least, I never remember to have met with it elsewhere, and it may therefore be regarded as a branch of the art rather local than general. The creeper is the larva of the stone-fly (*Scottice* May-fly), in which condition it passes most of the winter and spring months, living under stones in shallow water, from whence it may generally be readily obtained in quantities sufficient for angling purposes. It will

live for a day in any perforated can or bait-box, even if kept in the pocket, and for a longer time in a little water. The mode of baiting and using the creeper is as follows. Put the upper hook through the shoulder, and the lower hook through the tail of the creeper, so that it may hang straight on the line ; when baited, use it precisely in the same manner as the worm described under Worm-fishing for Trout, always selecting rapid rather than still parts of the stream. The bright weather and low clear water, which are best for worm-fishing, will also be found most favourable for the creeper. The stone-fly usually remains in its larval or " creeper" condition until the middle of May, and from early in April until this time heavy baskets may often be made with it. When in season, the creeper is commonly from an inch to an inch and a quarter long.

The rod, line, and hooks recommended for worm-fishing, omitting the shot or sinkers, and setting the hooks a little closer together, will be found the best tackle for creeper-fishing.

About the middle of May the creeper changes from the larval into the fly state, casting its tortoiseshell-like covering, and unsheathing its wings, of which, however, it makes but little use. Mr.

Stewart, whose excellent chapter on the subject should be studied by all Border anglers, considers that the fly is even more deadly than the creeper. He advocates the use of two flies as the bait. Except, however, on very large rivers like the Tweed, I confess I think the large one is to be preferred, both because it is more easily put on and kept on the hooks, and because it presents a more natural appearance in the water. The fly is nearly the same length as the creeper, and the tackle used for one should be used for the other. In fact, when the creepers are changing the angler will often find it convenient to fish indiscriminately with either the one or the other. Trout take the stone-fly best *under* water, and *close to the edges of the stream* or pool, even under hollow banks, if the fly can be got there. This point is laid much stress on by Border anglers, and with good reason, inasmuch as the natural spots to find the fly are close to the banks, from which they are washed; and it is here consequently that the Trout come to look for them. A dark full water is more favourable for the effective use of the stone-fly than one that is low and clear; but in both states good baskets may be made with it. The flies should be collected in a box the night or early morn-

ing before they are to be used ; the best places for finding them being under the stones above, but near the water's edge ; and where most cast-off shells are seen, the fly will probably be found to be most numerous.

Colonel Campbell tells me that he has had great success on the Border streams, with this fly used with blow-line tackle (as described on the next page).

A method of natural-fly fishing is also much practised on the Peterel, and doubtless on many other neighbouring streams, in which *two* flies—the generic names of which I could not ascertain—are used upon a small double hook.

The season for stone-fly fishing begins about the middle of May, and ends about the middle of June.

BLOW-LINE FISHING WITH THE MAY-FLY.

Besides the fishing above described the only really effective method of using the natural fly for Trout is with the "blow-line ;" and the place to see blow-line fishing is in the Lakes of Westmeath. Indeed, this beautiful chain of waters seems to be the natural habitat of the art. Each lake in its

turn, as the fly appears on it, becomes for a few days a centre of attraction to the angling community, and many a boat which, as Pat says, is only safe provided you do not "cough or snaze," is then dragged from her moorings—perhaps at the bottom of the lake—and pressed into the service. The art of blow-line fishing, though in its principles exceedingly simple, demands much nicety of execution in practice, and, as indeed its name implies, it cannot be pursued at all without the assistance of that most inconstant element, the wind. Weather, however, proving propitious, the tackle is easily adjusted. A skein of floss silk prepared for the purpose, and attached to the end of a light running-line, is substituted, so far as the actual casting is concerned for the "reel-line," and to this, instead of the ordinary fly-collar, is fastened a single small hook whipped on a strand of fine gut. The hook is baited with a May-fly, and as the boat drifts the wind carries out the floss silk, which ought to be so managed by the aid of hand and rod that only the hook and fly should actually touch the water. Near the edges of the reeds will usually be found the greatest quantity of *Ephemeridæ*, and as corollary the greatest number of Trout. The

exact time for this fishing varies a little, as the spring has been cold or genial ; and the several lakes vary also *inter se*, which is a great convenience to the fisherman ; but from the middle to the end of May is commonly about the time. The Westmeath lakes, when the fly "is up," will well repay a visit, as the fish, which are at this time in the highest condition, run from two to five, and sometimes ten pounds, and take the natural fly freely ; and if the angler puts Dr. Peard's charming book, "A Year of Liberty," into his portmanteau, he will need no abler or more agreeable guide.

An analogous system to that above described is pursued occasionally on some streams in England ; but on others it is strictly prohibited, and on many hardly considered fair fishing. The circumstances of the two cases, however, are entirely different.

WORM-FISHING FOR TROUT.

FOR the present scientific method of worm-fishing for Trout we are chiefly indebted to Mr. Stoddart and Mr. Stewart. This branch of the art was, until late years, principally confined to rivers in a state of partial flood—rising or falling. The per-

former, armed with a short stiff rod and extra coarse tackle, walked down the river or stream, fishing the pools and likely runs in front of him, and hoisting out bodily any unlucky fish which the purblinding condition of its own element was mainly instrumental in transferring to ours. Now all this is changed, and worm-fishing for Trout is a branch of the gentle art requiring much nicety and skill in its successful performance, and rapidly becoming second only to fly-fishing and spinning in the estimation of anglers.

We have learnt that the real time for the use of the worm is not when rivers are swollen or swelling, but when they are low and bright,—June and July in Scotland, and July and August in England, being the two best months—at the time, in short, when fly-fishing is, from the nature of the case, least attractive and most unremunerative. Instead of short rods and coarse tackle, long, light weapons, and the very finest gut, are in requisition, with which the worm-fisher enters the river, and wading as nearly up the middle as he can, fishes before him the swift runs and shallows, and the broad bed of the stream itself ; often going far towards filling his creel without ever setting foot on the bank. Worm-fishing, as above described, is certainly a

very deadly—probably the most deadly—mode of Trout fishing generally sanctioned by the canons of the art ; and it is not at all to be wondered at that on some much-frequented waters its use is prohibited.

But there are thousands of miles of river and stream in the wilds of Ireland and Scotland, and some few still in England, where from year's end to year's end the fly of the angler rarely falls, and on which the breed of Trout is only improved by a little thinning out now and then. Here is the legitimate domain of the worm-fisher, and thus pursued worm-fishing is a sport which need fear comparison with none.

As regards the tackle to be used in worm-fishing, I cannot better explain the views which I would commend to the reader's consideration than by quoting a letter which I addressed to a contemporary periodical in January, 1867 :—

“ NEW WORM TACKLE FOR TROUT.

“ I see in your last number a letter asking me to explain through your columns the principle of the two-hook Trout worm tackle, to which I incidentally referred in a recent communication on the subject of the relative advantages of the

various bends of hooks. It gives me much pleasure to comply with this request.

“The easiest way of explaining the form of the tackle will be by a diagram, but before doing this it may perhaps be desirable to preface my remarks by a few observations on the views hitherto prevailing on the subject of Trout worm tackle.

“*With one exception, no writer on fishing that I am acquainted with has ever suggested the use of more than a single hook.* On looking through the modern school of angling authors, I find the following recommendations and instructions on the subject:—Bowlker, in his ‘Art of Angling,’ recommends a single No. 5 or No. 6 hook; Mr. Stoddart advises, in his ‘Angler’s Companion,’ single hooks, sizes No. 10, 11, or 12, ‘according to the dimensions of the stream, its condition, and the kind of Trout inhabiting it.’ Mr. Bailey, in his ‘Angler’s Instructor,’ suggests a single No. 7; Otter’s ‘Modern Angler,’ a No. 5; ‘Glenfin’ (‘The Fishing Rod, and How to Use It,’) a 6 or 7; ‘Ephemera,’ Hewett Wheatley, and some other authors, either simply recommend ‘a single hook,’ without naming the size, or omit the question altogether whilst Mr. Moffat, whose ‘Secrets of Angling’ burst upon the world since all the foregoing works appeared, of course hits upon a combination the very worst possible, and one which would be tolerably certain to lose three out of every four fish run—*i.e.*, one small hook, *extra fine in the wire!* The ‘member for Finsbury,’ as this author, with the detestable slang which some

modern writers appear to think funny, calls the Trout, would certainly let Mr. Moffat into at least one angling secret with which he is at present unacquainted, if he were to appear on the banks of the Tweed, or the Spean, armed with such an apparatus.

“ It will thus be seen that a ‘ single hook ’ for Trout worm-fishing has been hitherto universally recommended by angling authorities, with, as I before stated, a solitary exception, and that is Mr. Stewart, who in his ‘ Practical Angler,’ boldly deviates from the beaten track, and gives a diagram (of which, for the sake of clearness, a facsimile is appended) of a tackle composed of *four* small hooks, in lieu of the conventional single large one. I give Mr. Stewart the greatest credit for the originality of this idea, which belongs to him alone ; at the same time, I am not surprised at its proving, as he himself admits, only a modified success. Mr. Stewart says that with this tackle he found he could kill larger fish, but fewer in number, than with the single hook, and that this experience



4-hook Tackle
(Baited).

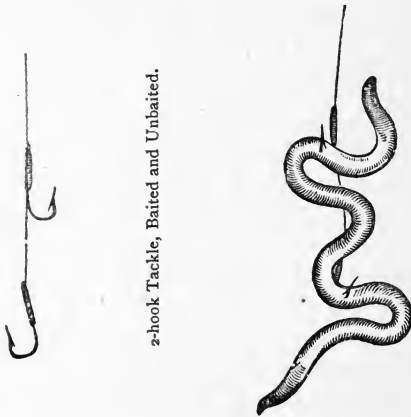
was confirmed by others. He attributes, and I have no doubt correctly, the diminution in the numbers of fish run, primarily to the circumstance of its being impossible properly to conceal so large a number of hooks in a single worm, and

to their being consequently seen by the fish. This was the principal drawback to the four-hook tackle. As a minor inconvenience, Mr. Stewart also mentions that, from the number of hooks often fixed in the fish's mouth when landed, a certain waste of time necessarily occurred.

“These being the incidental disadvantages of Mr. Stewart's plan, its advantages were, (1) that the worm was more quickly baited than with the single hook, (2) that it lived much longer—with the large single hook it dies almost directly—(3) that it presented a much more natural appearance to the fish, and (4) that, owing to the superior penetrating tendency of small over large hooks, much fewer fish escaped after being once hooked, whilst it became possible to use the finest gut, which could not be safely done with large heavy hooks. This of itself is an advantage the importance of which can hardly be over-estimated in Trout fishing in clear streams.

“As regards the other point—the killing powers—my own experience of the tackle was that when fishing properly *up stream*, and with a shortish line, *hardly any fish escaped at all*, whilst with the large single hook, I think the experience of most of my brother anglers will bear me out when I say that fully 50 per cent. of runs were ‘missed.’ On the other hand, I fully recognised the practical force of the objections mentioned by Mr. Stewart to his own four-hook tackle, and accordingly I endeavoured to construct a tackle similar in principle but different in detail, which should

combine its advantages, without being open to its drawbacks. The result of my experiments was that a tackle consisting of two hooks instead of four, and these a trifle larger and thicker in the wire, fulfilled the required conditions, and also combined one or two material improvements in other points. Annexed is a diagram of this tackle,



2-hook Tackle, Baited and Unbaited.

baited and unbaited. The size of the hooks, &c., can be varied slightly according to the size of the stream, or of the worms.

“The worm is here shown in a curled-up position in order to contrast more readily with Mr. Stewart’s tackle, but in actual work it is recommended that the worm should, on the contrary, hang as *straight* as possible on the hooks, which gives it a more natural appearance, and is in every way much the more killing method.

“The great advantages, in several points, of Mr. Stewart’s tackle over the old large single hook have been already explained. The following are the advantages which I believe will be found to belong to the two-hook over the four-hook tackle :—(1.) It is baited in *less than half* the time. (2.) The worm lives much longer. (3.) Its appearance is much more natural and lively. (4.) The hooks are comparatively unseen. (5.) They are ‘disgorged’ in half the time.

“In killing powers I do not think that there is any appreciable difference, but if there is, the extra size of hook and strength of wire which can be employed in the two-hook tackle ought to give it the advantage. It is also, of course, more easily made.

“In order to bait this tackle, I put the upper hook quite *through* the worm, laterally, about half an inch below the head, just above the knot, and the second hook similarly about an inch below it, according to the size of the worm, as shown in the engraving.

“It will be found that the worm, especially when unscoured, is very apt to wriggle itself off the hooks, or into pieces, and the most effectual remedy for this inconvenience, and one which a very little practice will make easy, is to put the two hooks through the worm as expeditiously as possible, and then drop the worm instantly into the water ; the cold partially numbs it, and prevents it twisting off.

“Thus much as to worm-fishing for Trout. I

am by no means clear, however, that this tackle will not be found equally advantageous in all kinds of worm-fishing, either with a float, as for Barbel, Bream, Perch, &c., and especially in running water. If Trout, which are in many respects a very shy fish, will take it readily in the finest and brightest water, there seems to be no reason why other and bolder fish should not do so ; and if they will, I cannot but think, for the reasons above mentioned, that it must entirely supersede the present single-hook system."

The trace for worm tackle should consist of about two yards of the finest stained gut ; one or two shot, according to the depth and rapidity of the stream, being placed on the line some 14 inches above the hooks. The object of this is to weight the bait, so as to bring it close to or touching the bottom without checking or sticking fast ; but in *broad shallow* water no sinkers at all will be found necessary. A longish rod is most convenient for the purpose.

With regard to baits, any well-scoured worms which are not much larger nor smaller than that represented in the woodcut will do ; but for worm-fishing for Trout, as for most other species of fresh-water fish, the brandling, or striped dunghill worm, is distinctly the best,—probably owing to its peculiar pungent smell and red colour. For the

purpose of rapid baiting the most convenient manner of carrying the worms is in a wide-mouthed bag attached to the button-hole. A worm that is disfigured or dead should never be kept on the hooks. This is perhaps the most important point of all. The name of the worm indicates where it can best be found. Before use it should, if possible, be placed in a damp moss for two or three days.

After being cast up stream as far as the length of rod and line will conveniently admit, the bait should be allowed to be carried back with the current nearly to the angler's feet. If in its passage the line comes to a suspicious stop, the nature of which is not obvious, or if a fish evidently takes the bait, the line should be allowed to remain for three or four seconds motionless, when the angler should strike,—not very hard, as the hooks are small,—but still firmly and decidedly.

In worm-fishing for Trout, perhaps more than in any other kind of fishing, the short-handled pocket net described at page 82 will be found an invaluable auxiliary.

WHITE-TROUT FISHING.

UNDER the name of White or Sea Trout are often included in ordinary parlance several species which are properly distinct, as the Salmon Trout and Bull Trout (*Salmo trutta* and *Salmo eriox*), and also others the specific positions of which are undetermined or disputed. One cause of the difficulty which an angler, who is not also a thorough ichthyologist, finds in identifying the various species of migratory *Salmonidæ*, is the great variety of local names often applied to one and the same fish. On the Tweed, for instance, the *Salmo eriox*, which is of course most widely known by its proper name of Bull Trout, is simply "The Trout;" on the Coquet it commonly goes by the name of "The Salmon," and it is believed to be identical with the Sewin or Sewen of Wales. To anglers, by far the most interesting species is the Salmon Trout.

Salmon Trout fishing when good is perhaps, at any rate for a time, the most fascinating of all fishing. Indigenous in many of our best Salmon and Bull Trout rivers, and frequently abounding in streams which produce neither the one nor the

other, there is no fish that swims which rises more fearlessly to the fly, or when hooked, shows for its size such indomitable—English pluck I was about to say—but at any rate such determined and enduring courage. In fact, the bright graceful *Salmo trutta* is the most game and mettlesome, if not, on the whole, the most beautiful fish known to Europe, or probably to the world.

Although the Don, the Spey, Tay, Annan, Nith, and many other Scotch waters, as well as a few English rivers produce the Sea Trout in tolerable abundance, Ireland must be considered as its home *par excellence*. Many of the streams and lakes on the west coast of Ireland produce Sea Trout in an abundance, rare if not unknown, in the sister Island.

Salmon Trout are migratory, and in this respect resemble the Salmon more than the Brown Trout; other of their habits, however, seem more allied to the latter species, and, as already remarked, the fish would appear to stand in its habits and instincts somewhere about midway between the two. So with regard to the flies used for their capture; in size and shape they more commonly bear a resemblance to natural insects, a resemblance which cannot be

sacrificed without loss of efficiency ; in colours, on the other hand, for some of the most killing artificial White Trout flies no natural prototype could be found. Under these circumstances, the arguments in the preliminary remarks on fly-fishing apply with full force to White or Sea Trout, *and the three typical flies already recommended for Brown Trout (including the plain hackle wing) dressed with a very slight variation, will be found at least as killing on lakes and rivers as any of the numerous local or general flies.*

From what has been said, it would naturally be inferred that colour bears a more important part in White than in Brown Trout fishing. In fact, as "natural imitation" recedes in importance, colour advances, and the "salmon sympathies," if I may so express it, of Sea Trout are principally shown, so far as fly-fishing is concerned, by the fact, everywhere recognised in practice, that they usually prefer in flies a certain amount of actual glitter as well as strength of colour. Therefore, in dressing the three flies for White Trout the addition of a little tinsel is desirable—to the Yellow, gold tinsel, and to the Brown and Green, gold or silver according to fancy. The tinsel should be applied sparingly, as its effect is

weakened by excess. Three complete turns round the body are ample ; the tinsel being of course broad or narrow as the fly is large or small. Occasionally in very large waters the silver or gold flies recommended for Salmon, and dressed small, will be found very killing.

As in lake fishing for the ordinary Brown Trout, I advise the use of the Yellow fly as the dropper, and the Green as the stretcher to begin with ; the Brown being reserved in case a change seems desirable.

The limits within which the sizes of White Trout flies vary, although influenced to some extent by the common considerations of water and weather, are narrower than those applicable to Brown Trout ; and White Trout flies are rarely required to be dressed on hooks smaller than No. 8, or larger than No. 13, (*vide* Plate, p. 42). But size is still a point of great importance, and as it is desirable to exactly suit the size of the fly to the fish and to the water, the White Trout fisher should keep by him all or nearly all the *intermediate* sizes.

In the case of White, as in that of Brown Trout, too great stress can hardly be laid on the importance of *carrying the flies loose in a box*.

From the moment they are dressed they should never be squeezed or pressed, as in a fly-book, for instance, as they thereby lose much of their crispness and vitality.

All the larger sized flies for White Trout should be dressed with a loop, both as lasting much longer, and, by the method of fastening herein proposed (see p. 111), swimming much better. The method of working the flies, and the other observations as to the how, when, and where of Brown Trout fly-fishing and minnow-fishing, apply also in almost every case to the Salmon Trout. Both this fish and Bull Trout will occasionally take the worm, but it is at best an uncertain bait.

The double-handed fly-rod, similar to that already recommended for Brown Trout fishing in lakes, will generally be found to answer best for White Trout fishing.

When in full season, and tolerably fresh from the sea, the White Trout is bright and silvery, but as autumn spawning time approaches, the fish begin to lose their brilliancy of scaling, and acquire a reddish or blackish tinge. The most common weight is from one to five pounds, but specimens have been taken as heavy as twenty

pounds. Some years ago I hooked and played a Sea Trout which must have exceeded ten pounds ; but having only a light single-handed fly-rod I could not exercise that wholesome pressure on his movements which is so desirable, and after three-quarters of an hour of alternate somersaulting and "sulking" he eventually broke me.

GRAYLING FISHING.

GENERAL REMARKS.

WHILST yielding to the Trout in courage and dash, the Grayling is yet a beautiful and mettlesome fish—a foeman not unworthy of our steel—and if the former is the handsomer, the latter would by many be considered the prettier species of the two. The Trout has, so to speak, a Herculean cast of beauty ; the Grayling rather that of an Apollo—light, delicate, and gracefully symmetrical.

Except in the Clyde, where the fish was introduced about ten years ago, there are no Grayling, so far as I am aware, either in Ireland or Scotland—and even in England the fish is still local, and comparatively speaking, even rare. The following are amongst the streams which produce

the Grayling in more or less abundance. In Hampshire and Wiltshire—the Test, Wharf, and both the Avons ; in Herefordshire—the Dove, Lug, Arrow, Wye, and Irwin ; in Shropshire—the Teme and Clun, Corve and Onny ; in Staffordshire—the Hodder, Trent, Dove, and Wye ; in Derbyshire—the Dove ; in Merionethshire—the Dee ; in Lancashire—the Ribble ; in Yorkshire—the Derwent, Ure, Wharfe, and Whiske ; and in Cumberland, according to Heysham, the Esk and the Eden.

The Wye, Dee, Lug, and Teme are the only Welsh rivers holding Grayling that I am acquainted with. Leintwardine on the Teme may be considered as the centre of the Grayling country ; and from Leintwardine to Ludlow is the best piece of Grayling water in the kingdom ; so far as my experience goes.

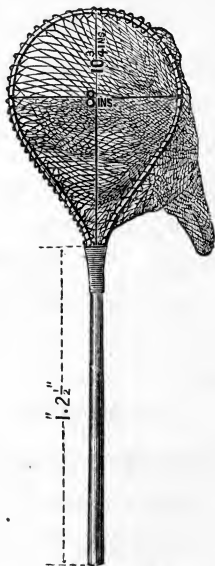
The cause of the non-existence of Grayling in Irish or Scotch rivers is probably to be found in the “rock, stone, and scour,” which are their most common characteristics, whilst the Grayling appears to thrive best in rivers, the beds of which are composed partly or wholly of sandy gravel or loam ; and instead of dashing torrents and rapids in uninterrupted succession, affects waters

in which shallows and "stickles" alternate with gentler currents and deep sluggish "lanes" or channels of stream.

The spawning months for Grayling are April and the early part of May, when they come up to the gravelly scours in shoals—in this respect resembling dace. The spawning process occupies from three to four days, after which the fish return to their own haunts, and are then unfit for food until about August; during the intervening months the spawned fish rarely take the fly or bait, and if caught in May or June *should be returned to the river*. The Grayling season begins in August and properly ends with December, as after Christmas the fish begin to get heavy in spawn, a condition in which a good sportsman will not kill them, although it cannot perhaps be truly said that they are actually unfit for the table until after the spawning has taken place. When I last fished the Teme, the limit of size under which the Leintwardine Club wisely prohibited the taking of Grayling was 10 inches. I hear, however, that the club rules have been recently revised.

One year old fish are locally termed "pinks;" at two years, when they weigh about $\frac{1}{4}$ lb., they

become "shot" or "shut" Grayling; and afterwards "Grayling." The "Pink" Grayling have neither spots nor lateral lines observable. "Shot" Grayling have spots, but no well-marked longitudinal lines as seen in the full-grown fish. At



three years old the Grayling weighs about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in average waters, and is supposed to continue growing at about the same rate, viz. $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. per annum, until reaching its maximum weight, which may probably be considered under ordinary conditions

from 4 to 5 pounds. A Grayling weighing half a pound spawns, but a "Shot" Grayling does not.

The mouth of the Grayling is exceedingly tender; and consequently both striking and playing, the fish requires to be handled carefully. For the same reason, and also from the peculiar character of the banks, a net is almost a necessity in Grayling waters. The light pocket-net shown in the engraving opposite will be found the most convenient for the purpose.

Grayling but seldom take the minnow, either natural or artificial, or the worm. The three most killing ways of fishing for them being with the artificial fly, with the artificial grasshopper, and by float-fishing with gentles.

FLY-FISHING.

Fly-fishing for Grayling begins in earnest in August—that is, about a month earlier than either the grasshopper or gentle fishing—and continues through September and October. Fair bags may not unfrequently be made as late as November, but a warm day, and the middle hours of it, are then desiderata. Indeed, as soon as the weather becomes cold, the warmest hours of the day, say from 12 till 2 or 3 o'clock, will usually prove

best for the fly. The flies locally used for Grayling fishing are not quite so numerous as those for Trout—the only reason being, I believe, that the localities themselves are fewer ; but still the Grayling fisher's repertory will commonly contain from ten to twenty varieties, good and bad, the greater part of which are wholly unnecessary, and in their effects on the basket mischievous. Perhaps the most killing of the list are the August, Whirling, and Blue Duns (light and dark) ; Silver-twist, blue ; Red and Green Insects ; Willow, Orange, and Sedge or Cinnamon fly. One or other of these will kill all through the season ; but if the Grayling fisher will substitute for them and their congeners the three flies, Yellow, Green, and Brown, which I have recommended for Brown Trout, and use them steadily throughout the season, he will probably find reason to congratulate himself on the exchange.

The arguments which have been adduced on this subject as applicable to Trout flies, as well as the observations on Trout fishing generally in streams, and how it is to be done, Rod, Tackle, &c., apply equally to Grayling fishing and flies. The finest possible stained gut should be always used for both flies and collar.

Comparatively few heavy Grayling are taken with the fly, the haunts of the large fish being chiefly the long slow-running deeps which are most unfriendly to this mode of fishing. In the rapids and "stickles," small Grayling may be taken, but these scours are not really good either for the fly, grasshopper, or gentle. The best spots for all three are steady running streams, and *tails of pools*, for the fly about three, and for the grasshopper about four feet deep. The grasshopper can, however, be frequently used with advantage in water which is much too slow for the fly.

GRASSHOPPER-FISHING.

The lure known by the name of the artificial grasshopper, is really a rough imitation of a caterpillar, and not of a grasshopper. The best are imitations made as follows. Whip a strand of fine stained gut on to a No. 10 or No. 11 hook,* making the silk lapping extend as far as the bend of the hook. Take a lightish lead, bored, of about an inch in length; cut it down at one end to the

* If a No. 11 hook is used, which is on the whole the best size of bend, a small piece of the end of the shank should be nipped off, as the grasshopper would otherwise be too long and large for ordinary purposes.

length of the lapping (about three-quarters of an inch), taper it off at the thick end a little with a knife, and then run it over the shank of the hook, with the heaviest end towards the bend of the hook : pinch it so as to fix it *firmly* in its place ; and make a few transverse “nicks” with the knife to cause the dubbing to stay on : then lap the lead all over with *light* green worsted ; and make a few turns over this body with yellow silk, waxed with colourless wax. It is an improvement to the appearance of the grasshopper to run a narrow slip of straw down each side of the body under the yellow ribbing.

The form of the grasshopper is shown in the

Fig. 1.



Grasshopper.

Fig. 2.



Float.

engraving (figure 1). It should be baited for use with three or four large gentles put on the hook

so as to make a bunch and partly cover the bend and point. The trace should consist of three yards of fine stained gut.

The grasshopper is worked by "sinking and drawing," as it is termed : that is, the bait is thrown in and allowed to sink till it touches the bottom, and is then *steadily* drawn up again about a foot or a foot and a half, and allowed to sink as before. The stream is usually strong enough to shift the bait as much as is desirable, but if the water is too still for this, the result can be arrived at by "drawing" the bait a little to right or left with the rod. The great point is to be quite sure that the bait touches the bottom before drawing up, and in order to assist the eye in judging this point, it will be found of the greatest advantage to have a small moveable white mark on the line, placed a foot or a foot and a half higher up the line than the highest point which ought to be submerged. It is, in fact, a miniature float, always kept out of water, and the most convenient form is this. Take a small white feather, and cut off about half an inch of the hollow quill, and three-quarters of an inch of the solid white part of the feather-stem, just thick enough to fit neatly into the hollow quill cap (A), as shown in the engraving, figure 2 ; the cap passes over the

line and is shifted according to the average depth of the water fished.

A run will of course be perceived as the bait is being drawn up, when a smart stroke should be given, and the fish held *tightly*. Otherwise from its non-fighting propensities a large Grayling is very likely to get off: the hook also is a good deal encumbered with gentles. When first struck, the larger Grayling appear to me to fight as an eel does—pulling tail backwards, instead of running down, or away head first as other fish generally do; and I hardly ever remember seeing a hooked Grayling spring out of water.

The best spots for grasshopper-fishing have already been described. Where the water is deep enough, a short line worked almost perpendicularly near the bank will be found most successful; but by throwing out a considerable distance, excellent water otherwise inaccessible can often be reached. The cast may be made over hand like a fly to a distance of some ten yards, but care must be taken to allow the line to spread well behind, or otherwise the bait will perform various eccentric flights into the water or bushes. A longish light rod, say fourteen or fifteen feet, is most convenient for grasshopper-fishing: and the "General Rod," reel,

and line recommended for worm-fishing for Trout will be found to answer the purpose excellently.

As a rule, fish caught with the grasshopper are twice as large as those caught with the fly. September, October, November, and December are the best months, and the best days are usually quiet warm days succeeding frosty nights—in fact, grasshopper-fishing never fairly gets into play until after the first sharpish frost. From about eight A.M. until four P.M. is commonly the best time of day. I have been informed that grasshopper-fishing was first introduced into Shropshire about forty-five years ago by the late Mr. Jones, fisherman, of Ludlow ; whose son, also residing in Ludlow, is, or was when I last fished with him, as deadly a Grayling-killer as I ever met.

GENTLE-FISHING.

Before the introduction of the artificial grasshopper, it was the custom, in Shropshire at any rate, to fish for Grayling with gentles only for bait and ground-bait, used in the same manner as we now use them for Roach, and with similar tackle. Fished in the “ Nottingham style ” they will still be found a very killing bait.

In the above and every description of gentle-fishing a tin box like that shown in the engraving, with a tray in front of the opening, and which can



be suspended from the button-hole, will be found a really great practical convenience and saving of time. This box was, I believe, the ingenious invention of Messrs. Dawson, Bell Yard, Temple Bar.

SALMON FISHING.

OUTLINE OF "SALMON HISTORY" AND
NOMENCLATURE.

A HISTORY of the Salmon, in the proper sense of the term, is beyond the scope of this work, and I have moreover already dealt with the subject in detail in the "Angler-Naturalist." A few facts, however, which I shall put as briefly as possible, are desirable, if only to enable the fisherman to know what Salmon he may put into his creel and what he ought to return to the river. The general terms used in Salmon nomenclature may also perhaps be useful.

The young of a Salmon remains one, two, or three years in the river before migrating to the sea: during this period it is a "parr." Just before migrating it changes its golden and brown coat for a silver one, and becomes a "smolt," at which time it weighs from one to two ounces. The smolt returns from the sea a "grilse," commonly in from five to ten weeks, but sometimes more, and having increased in weight from two to ten pounds. Sometimes, however, the smolt does not come back as a grilse, but returns in

the spring of the following year as a small Salmon.*

The smolt, whether it comes back in the grilse or Salmon state, and the mature Salmon also, spawn usually about November or December, and go back to the sea as a spent-fish, or "kelts," in February or March ; ordinarily returning during the following four or five months as "clean" fish, and increased in weight from seven to ten pounds.

Shortly before spawning, and whilst returning to the sea as "kelts," Salmon are considered "foul fish"—unfit for food—and their capture is then illegal. "Foul fish" before spawning are, if males, termed "red fish," from the orange-coloured stripes with which their gill-covers are marked, and the golden orange tint of the body ; the females are darker in colour and are called "black fish." After spawning the males are called "Kippers," and the females "Shedders," or "Baggits." The History of the Salmon-

* The circumstance of the non-return of the Smolt in all cases during the first year, and the theory of the *spawning of Salmon in alternate years*, is now very generally received amongst naturalists. It was first propounded by the author in the *Times* in 1863, and subsequently in the "Angler-Naturalist," published during the same year.

Trout and other migratory Salmonidæ has never been quite so decidedly established ; but in many points it certainly, and in most others probably, is nearly identical with that of the Salmon. The colours of the Salmon-Trout and Bull-Trout before or after spawning are also nearly the same as those of the Salmon, and their condition may be ascertained accordingly.

The above names may perhaps be conveniently presented in a tabular form :—

NAMES OF SALMON IN DIFFERENT CONDITIONS
AND STAGES OF GROWTH.

Parr	Before taking its migratory dress.
Smolt	After taking ditto.
Grilse	Smolt, on first return from the sea, <i>during the same year.</i>
Salmon	Smolt, not returning till year following ; or Grilse after its first trip to the sea, and at all subsequent stages.
Clean fish	Fish fit to eat ; neither just going to spawn, nor just after spawning.
Foul fish	<i>Vice versâ.</i>

- Fresh-run fish . . . Salmon recently ascending
rivers or lakes from the sea.
- Red fish Male Salmon just before
spawning.
- Black fish Female Salmon ditto.
- Kippers Male Salmon just after spawn-
ing.
- Shedders or Baggists Female Salmon ditto.
- Kelts or Spent fish . Male or female Salmon return-
ing to the sea after spawn-
ing.
- Well-mended Kelts . Salmon which (after spawn-
ing) have partially re-
covered their condition in
the fresh water.

Both Grilse and Salmon can always be at once distinguished from the Salmon-Trout and Bull-Trout, by the spots. After the smolt stage, these latter fish invariably have spots on the sides, *below the lateral or side-line*; the line, that is, longitudinally dividing each side of the fish into two halves. Salmon and grilse never have such spots.

Grilse can be distinguished from Salmon, (1) by the tail being forked, whereas in the Salmon it is

always nearly square, and ultimately convex ; and (2) by the scales, which in the grilse come off even with the slight pressure of the hand. Fresh-run Salmon—*i.e.*, Salmon just fresh from the sea—carry on their bodies the parasites commonly called “tide lice,” these drop off after a few hours’ contact with the fresh water, but the marks, something like miniature leech-bites, remain for a day or two. The longer the Salmon remains in fresh water the less brilliant becomes its colour.

FLY-FISHING.

Although, in common with many Trout-fishers who are also Salmon-fishers, I prefer good Trout-fishing to any other sport with the rod, it must be admitted that there are points in which Salmon-fishing carries off the palm—and carries it off too not only from Trout-fishing, but from every other sport which these islands afford. Perhaps I could not with truth say that I prefer fishing to shooting, or shooting to hunting ; they are a glorious trio, to each of whom in turn I have sworn allegiance ; and if like Paris I had a golden apple to bestow, it should be given to Fishing only because she has been in a special

sense my mistress—"the fairest and most loving wife"—in many a wild and lonely spot where but for her gentle companionship and solace, I should have felt myself in every sense of the word alone. But though it would perhaps be impossible, honestly, and "unbiased by self-profit," to award the palm of superiority to either of our three national sports as a whole, I unhesitatingly assert that there is no single moment with horse or gun into which is concentrated such a thrill of hope, fear, expectation, and exultation as that of the rise and successful striking of a heavy Salmon. I have seen men literally unable to stand, or to hold their rod, from sheer excitement.

And indeed in this very excitement—in the impetuosity of spirit it engenders—lies almost the only real difficulty of Salmon-fishing. Two causes combine to make the moment of striking a critical one: In the first place the Salmon is so large and bright, and in the second so comparatively slow-moving, owing to his bulk, that the eye almost certainly perceives him in the water before he has actually taken the fly; when a premature stroke, an almost instinctive tightening of the muscles and line, at once snatches the fly from the fish, and the fish from the creel. The art

is to resist for a moment the inclination to strike ; only for one moment, but long enough to allow the fish to take and turn down again with the fly ; and then strike if you will : not a slight hesitating blow like the tap of a lady's fan—for there is often a long line and a heavy strain on it between the Salmon and his would-be captor—but a strong, steady, determined stroke bringing the line up as flat as a knife, and driving the tapering hook-point well in over the barb.

Next to the number of Salmon lost through striking too quickly, are those lost from striking too feebly. I repeat, therefore, strike strongly and hard, as I have described, and *repeat the stroke* by way of making sure. If the tackle will not stand this strain it is a clear proof that it is not fit for Salmon-fishing. A weak stroke is worse than useless, because whilst it fails to make the hook penetrate, it provokes the fish to a sudden violent effort to rid himself of it, and thus lessens the chance of his hooking himself.

If the above mode of striking is adopted, not more than one fish in five which fairly take the fly in open water ought to escape. I kept a register for some time of my losses and takes, and I found this to be a fair average.

Having mastered this point, the tyro who knows anything of Trout-fishing will find that there is very little to learn in the art of Salmon-fishing which a few hours' practice under a good master will not suffice to teach him. The principles of casting and working the fly are in fact almost identical, allowing for the difference in size and weight of the tackle employed. All the movements, that is to say, and particularly that given to the fly in the water, are somewhat slower than in Trout-fishing. The method of casting—the principles which should guide the Salmon-fisher in selecting the size of his fly—the general condition of wind, weather, &c.—are also similar, and for all these the reader is referred to the observations on Trout-fishing.

Salmon, however, depend more on the condition of the water than do Trout, and there are many rivers in which the chances of taking a fish are almost *nil*, unless there is a "fresh" in the river.

As regards the "where" to fish for Salmon in any given river, this can only be acquired by local experience. Sometimes what to the natural man appears a most lovely cast, hardly holds a fish from one end of the season to the other, whilst in the uninviting lagoon-like looking hole below, a rise

may be predicted almost with certainty. Even particular stones are not unfrequently haunted by Salmon with a pertinacity which is very remarkable. In the Conway, for instance, I have often had pointed out to me a stone, the little eddy behind which was almost invariably tenanted by a Salmon. Such is also the Red Stone below Makerston on the Tweed, and there are many similar instances.

Why Salmon should evince such strong predilections for particular spots is a question which has never been entirely answered ; but that they do so evince them is beyond a doubt ; and whilst such is the case, the Salmon-fisher who does not want to waste his time will never, if he can help it, try a new water without some local guide who knows the casts, and what are and what are not the spots most likely to hold Salmon.

A gaff is sometimes necessary for the safe and expeditious landing of Salmon, but it requires to be used by an experienced eye and hand, and in the early spring months, when the kelts or spawned fish are dropping down the river, a net, (which should not be less than two feet in diameter), will both save the fisherman's time and probably the lives of at least some "doubtful" fish. In fact, on

many early Salmon rivers a net is almost a *sine quá non*, and the use of the gaff should be discouraged in every way.

Another important point in Salmon angling is "fishing for a second rise." If a Salmon through his own or the angler's fault has missed the fly, he will, if properly managed, frequently rise a second, and sometimes a third or even a fourth time, and be hooked after all. When a Salmon has risen, instead of immediately throwing again, the best plan is for the angler to sit down quietly on the bank for a few minutes, and then carefully cast over the fish again, beginning a few yards above the actual spot where the rise took place, and bringing the fly gradually down over it. If the fish does not rise, a short interval should be allowed as before, during which the fly should be changed for one of another colour, and afterwards the same process repeated. Some good fishers advise changing the fly the first time of recasting, and a second or even third time afterwards; but my experience is in favour of the system here described, which is both simpler and less troublesome. If a Salmon will not rise either to the original or to a new fly, the chances are much against his rising again at all at that moment. He may do so, how-

ever, at another time of the day, and in view of this contingency the casting over him of a number of flies a great many times is less likely to attract than to disgust him.

WADING.

Wading is often necessary in Salmon-fishing, and indeed in Trout-fishing also. Where the fisherman has to wade deep, as is often the case in Salmon-fishing, fishing trousers fastening round the waist will often be found a great convenience : they are also much less dangerous than either wading stockings or leather boots. In the event of a sudden immersion these latter fill with water, and thus act as plummets, loaded with which even a strong swimmer may very easily be drowned. Wading trousers, on the contrary, take so long to fill that they practically act as floats during a time which is generally sufficient to enable a swimmer to reach the bank ; and they give of course a non-swimmer a proportionately better chance than he would otherwise have.

If leather boots are used, the best dressing that I am acquainted with, as also for shooting-boots, is a coat of the green-looking waterproof paste manufactured by Messrs. Strawson, of Crewkerne,

Somersetshire ; and for merely keeping the leather pliant when not in use, the following will be found an excellent mixture :—

Waterproofing for boots, &c.—Burgundy pitch, 1 oz. ; bees' wax, 2 oz. ; turpentine, 2 oz. ; neatsfoot oil, 1 pint. The turpentine should be added just before taking the composition off the fire.

SALMON AND GRILSE FLIES.

I shall make no attempt at giving a code of instructions for Salmon-fly making : it has been already done as far as accurate verbal description and woodcuts can do it, by several living authors, and very thoroughly and completely by the late Mr. Blacker, in a charming little volume illustrated by the *actual flies*. This, however, is a monograph, and however beautiful or interesting as a work of art, is too laborious and studious for an age in which so much has to be done in every twenty-four hours that even minutes are jealously economized. If anglers wish to know how to make a fly themselves—a most useful and important knowledge—a few lessons from a practical fly-tier will be worth volumes of precept. It is, however, an art requiring much nicety and delicacy of manipulation, and not to be acquired in any degree

of perfection without practice and a certain natural aptitude.

As with Trout-flies so with Salmon-flies, *none should ever be put into a fly-book or be otherwise compressed.* The elasticity of the hackle fibre is impaired by pressure, and all the fresh "crispness" of the fly is lost. If as soon as made flies are put into a box with others, they will bear any amount of tossing or tangling without injury, and a round tin box, equal in bulk to an ordinary fly-book, will contain quite as many flies and collars as any fly-fisher need wish to take with him to the river side.

I have already referred to this more than once, but it is in my opinion a point of such great importance that too much stress can hardly be laid upon it. This will be better understood when it is recollected that the whole art of fly-fishing, as we practise it, is based on the principle of simulating life, rather than death; and that between a fly new and crisp, and one which has been long flattened in a fly-book, there is almost as much difference when they are in the water as between a living and a dead insect.

For the arguments bearing upon the question of what a Salmon-fly ought to be—the *rationale*,

that is, of Salmon-flies—the reader is referred to the general introductory observations on fly-fishing. The table appended gives the formulary for the three flies there referred to :—

No alteration whatever is required in the dressing, from the smallest Grilse to the largest Shannon flies, except that the hooks, hackles, and wings must be proportionally larger or smaller.

The speciality of these flies it will be seen consists in the arrangement of hackles, which are, in fact, double, embracing a “shoulder” hackle, and what may perhaps be best described as a “head hackle;” the body of the fly is made a trifle shorter to admit of the additional set which are put on between the wing feathers and the loop, in the place commonly occupied by that foolish appendage, a twist of ostrich herl, which generally goes before anything else about the fly, and is useless whilst it lasts. The hackles commonly used in Salmon-flies are so small, and necessarily so much compressed and pushed out of position by the wings, that when in the water they present very little appearance of movement or life in the water.

The extra, or “head hackle,” should be about the same length in the fibre as the body of the fly from

	Tip.	Tail.	Butt.	Body.	Shoulder hackle.	Wing.	Head hackle.
"Silver"	<p>A single twist of the "embossed plate" used in the body.</p>	<p>1. Tuft of jay's wing (or any <i>bright</i> blue feather). 2. Golden pheasant topping.</p>	<p>A twist of bright "orange yellow" pig's wool.</p>	<p>Embossed silver plate.</p>	<p>Light blue hackle.</p>	<p>1. Golden pheasant topping. 2. Two feathers of jungle cock. 3. Four long fibres from red maccaw wing.</p>	<p>1. Light orange hackle. 2. Orange hackle.</p>
"Gold"	<p>1. Tuft of small cock of the rock feathers. 2. Golden pheasant topping.</p>	<p>A twist of bright crimson pig's wool.</p>	<p>Embossed gold plate.</p>	<p>Dark orange hackle.</p>	<p>Ditto.</p>	<p>1. Blue hackle. 2. Red orange hackle.</p>	<p>1. Blue hackle. 2. Red orange hackle.</p>
"Rainbow"	<p>1. Tuft of any light greenfeather. 2. Golden pheasant topping.</p>	<p>Bright golden yellow pig's wool forming part of body.</p>	<p>(Pig's wool.) 1. Bright golden yellow. 2. Red. 3. Claret, mixed with indigo towards shoulder.</p>	<p>Light blue hackle.</p>	<p>Ditto.</p>	<p>1. Orange hackle. 2. Red hackle.</p>	<p>1. Orange hackle. 2. Red hackle.</p>

head to butt. As, however, the size of hackles is limited, in very large flies it is impossible to carry out this proportion strictly ; but with a little trouble hackles of an inch and a half long in the fibre can easily be obtained by feather-dyers and tackle-makers, and up to this size anglers using the flies recommended should insist upon the proper proportion being maintained. These hackles not only possess an amount of transparent, almost prismatic, colour which no other part of the fly displays, but, as they are worked through the stream, open and close with every movement of the rod or fly, and give the appearance of life to what would otherwise look only like a bar of dead silver or gold or colour.

The principal wing-feathers in all these flies, are the black and white neck hackles of the jungle cock, and the next in importance feathers from the golden pheasant known as "toppings" —perhaps the two feathers which experience has proved to be on the whole most killing for Salmon in the greatest variety of combinations. If the expense of golden pheasant toppings in the wings is objected to, the best substitutes are golden orange hackles.

These colours have also the advantage not

only of being in themselves *strong* and glowing, but of harmonizing with the body colours of each of the three flies—a harmony which the hackles complete. As the harmonies of sound depend upon the combination of certain natural “intervals” furnished by the harmonic chord, so in forming harmonies of colour the natural or prismatic arrangement, as displayed by the solar spectrum of the optician, must in every case be taken as the basis. Thus in the gold-fly—the prevailing colour of which is intended to be a rich golden orange—red, orange, and yellow are the three predominant colours—orange (the gold of metallurgists) in the prismatic arrangement passing into red on the one side and yellow on the other. In “the Rainbow” the same model is closely followed, the whole of the prismatic colours being combined in the body and shoulder hackle in their proper sequence. In No. 3, which is a silver-bodied fly, no harmony of colour is strictly speaking possible—silver (or white brightened) not being a colour but rather a negation of it. In a more general sense, however, both white and black harmonize with all the other colours.

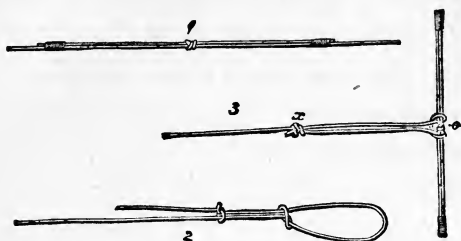
It is seldom—I may say never, except in large waters like the Shannon—that two Salmon-flies,

or one Grilse and one Salmon-fly, can be used with advantage. The bob-fly or dropper in lake Trout-fishing is often the most killing fly, because when properly worked it skips along the ripple like a real live insect endeavouring to rise after a partial immersion ; but the Salmon-fly, which is apparently not taken for a fly at all, kills best under water. If White-trout, however, are in the river, a White-trout fly, as the dropper, may often be used with advantage.

NEW KNOTS FOR GUT LOOPS AND DROP-FLIES.

I may here mention a method of fastening drop-flies on Salmon casting-lines which I have found very successful. The object sought to be attained is, of course, that the fly should remain for the longest possible time standing clear from—in fact, almost at right angles to—the line, with the least amount of knotting or thickening, and the greatest facility for changing. To secure the first, it is necessary that the casting-line should be stiffened at the point of intersection. This is effected by joining the two halves of the line in a single fisherman's knot, leaving about half an inch over at each end. The knot having been drawn straight and close, these two ends should be lapped down to

the line with a few turns of light coloured silk, as shown in figure 1 of the accompanying engraving ; and the effect of this arrangement will be found



to be that the casting-line at that point is trebly stiffened, with scarcely a perceptible increase of thickness or clumsiness. Over the central knot the loop of the drop-fly should be passed and drawn close in the manner shown in figure 3.

For the tying of these loops, and all others used in fishing, I have, I believe, succeeded in hitting upon a new and considerably improved form of knot,—the ordinary loop being both clumsy and crooked (a serious drawback to the perfect set of the fly), and, in thick gut, very difficult to manipulate. My knot (fig. 2, and x in fig. 3) is simply a new application of the principle of the ordinary single fisherman's knot, thus : a half knot is made, about an inch and a half or two inches

from the end of the gut, *but not drawn quite tight*; the end of the gut is doubled over and passed back again *from above* through the opening; and then again, with this end, a second half-knot, embracing the main link, is made below the first. Both half-knots are then again separately pulled tight, and drawn together. This produces the smallest possible knot, and one which will never draw and is perfectly straight.

The collar should be of the strongest picked Salmon-gut, *stained as already directed for Trout-gut*, and the strands knotted in a single "fisherman's knot," with a lapping of thin gut *inside*, or between the knots, instead of the ordinary silk lapping *outside*. This mode of lapping relieves the knot itself of half its duty, and on any sudden jerk, such as striking, acts as a sort of buffer to receive and distribute the strain. It is, moreover, simpler, much neater, and nearly twice as strong as the common double knot. Tied with the latter a couple of feet of very strong Salmon-gut will break—almost always at the knot—on a steady strain of from 12 to 15 lb.; tied on my method it will break at any other part in preference. The gut-lapping has also the advantage of being transparent, whilst silk is of course opaque. Fac-

similes of the new and of the old knot tied with the same strands of gut are annexed.



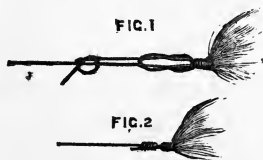
New knot.



Ordinary knot.

All Salmon-flies should be dressed with gut-loops, not only with the double object of strength and durability, but for the purpose of making the fly swim straight when attached to the casting-line. This last object, however, is not accomplished with the ordinary mode of knotting on the fly—viz., by forming a half-knot at the extremity of the casting-line, and then “reeving” it in and out through the loop. When thus attached the fly presents a sort of broken-backed appearance, and must of necessity swim head downwards instead of horizontally.

The following method will be found entirely



to obviate this defect, whilst it is at the same time neater and stronger and equally simple:— Pass the end of the casting-line through the fly-

loop *from above* ; then over the loop ; then up again through it from below ; and finally tie with it a half-knot round the main line, in the form shown in the diagram, fig. 1. Then draw the last-made knot tight, and slip it up to the loop, drawing the main line also tight, as shown in fig. 2, which is a *facsimile* of the knot as tied on a small Grilse-fly. In fig. 1 the loop is exaggerated in length for the sake of illustration.

The gut should always be well moistened before the knot is tied.

THE ROD.

Salmon-fishers have almost all their peculiar fancies about rods. Some pin their faith to the swishy, spliced, and somewhat top-heavy weapon which takes its name from Castle Connel ; whilst others, going to the opposite extreme, will fish with nothing more pliant than the old-fashioned, untapered, four or five ferrule-jointed rod of the past generation of London makers. The latter would doubtless bring against the swishing rod the charge of top-heaviness, whilst its owner would consider that the extra top weight and “play” of his rod did duty instead of muscular effort. He might probably put his argument thus:—“In

every cast your stiff rod has to be worked with twice the movement of arm that mine requires :” to which the reply would be, “Yes, but then my rod is so lightened towards the point, that it is no effort to me to work it.” For my own part I think that, like the chameleon philosophers, both are wrong and both are right ; in other words, that each rod possesses a valuable principle of its own, but carried to a mischievous excess in the two extreme types I have referred to. In the Salmon-rod *power* is pre-eminently necessary, and greenhart gives it. Lightness is another essential element, and the old-fashioned evenly-tapered hickory rod admirably fulfils the condition.

Very strong and tall anglers may wield, and very broad waters sometimes demand, a longer rod than 18 feet, but for all ordinary purposes I think from 18 to 19 feet will be found the most convenient length. In order to insure the greatest comfort and efficiency, the rings, &c., of Salmon rods, as of all others, should be stiff instead of moveable as ordinarily arranged.

THE REEL AND LINE.

A reel similar in pattern to that recommended for Trout, but capable of holding from 80 to 100 yards of casting-line will be found best. For an 18 or 19 foot rod, such as that described, a reel of four inches in the diameter of the plate gives on the whole the best balance.

The ordinary eight-plait dressed silk line, or the spun-cotton line, already elsewhere described, will be found the best, the latter being about one-third of the price of the former.

THE GAFF.

A *straight, sharp point* is the only real essential in a gaff. All other matters are comparatively unimportant. As the gaff has always to be carried by an attendant, one with a 6 or 7 foot *solid* handle is most convenient. In gaffing a Salmon there is an art which needs some little practice and presence of mind to acquire. Unskilful gaffers make a sort of dive or snatch at a fish. The proper plan, on the contrary, is cautiously but quickly to lower the gaff until the point nearly, but not quite, touches the fish's opposite side below the shoulder, and then give it a sharp, sudden *jerk*

(not stroke) inwards, which drives it home. Snatching, diving, and striking at Salmon with the gaff result in frequent hitchings of the line, and abortive scratches and cuts being inflicted on the fish, which, though impotent for purposes of capture, yet produce sufficient smart to frighten him into a final and despairing rush, which is frequently fatal, I mean to the basket. So obstinately stupid on this point are often even professional attendants, that I have frequently gaffed my Salmon myself with one hand, holding the rod in the other, rather than entrust either to their tender mercies.

HOOKS.

In the shape, weight, and especially in the *strength* of the larger sizes of my pattern of hooks, described at page 42, I have had particular regard to the requirements of the Salmon-fisher, and I believe these hooks will be found to combine these essentials in a greater degree than any of the existing patterns.

WORM-FISHING FOR SALMON.

The observations elsewhere offered on the differences of water and season for using the spinning bait for Salmon in different localities, apply

according to most authorities to a considerable extent to worm-fishing also. For example, Mr. Stoddart lays it down that worm-fishing "can be practised with success only when the river is clean and small," and yet in Ireland I have known seven clean salmon taken before breakfast out of "The Leap" on the river Bush, in April, when the water was all but in actual flood and hopelessly thick for the fly.

The mode of fishing as commonly practised is extremely simple: a large single hook, say No. 14 or 15, is whipped on to two or three yards of Salmon-gut. A supply of lob-worms having been obtained, and, if feasible, previously scoured, the hook is passed through the middle inch or two of two or three of them, according to their size and the size and state of the water, the last worm being so put on that no part of the hook or barb is left visible. Sufficient large split shot should then be fixed to the line about $1\frac{3}{4}$ feet above the bait, to take it well to the bottom, but yet they should not be so heavy as to prevent the stream carrying the bait freely along with it over the stones.

The bait is then worked very much like the worm bait for Trout, except that the angler,

having selected a pool or run in which he knows that there are plenty of Salmon, generally remains at the same place, shifting his ground a few paces at a time higher or lower. The usual symptom of a bite is a stoppage of the bait, followed by a very gentle twitching. Sometimes, however, though in my experience rarely, the Salmon takes the bait in a more reckless fashion, resembling rather the run of a Trout. Having taken the bait, the Salmon will frequently remain nearly or quite motionless for some little time, and then move steadily away. This is the moment to strike, and as the bait is invariably actually swallowed or pouched, there is little fear of the fish being missed. Should the fish move away at once after biting, line and time must be given him to pouch the bait. To provide for the contingency of any sudden moves or rushes on the part of the fish, and against that of any sudden check on the part of the angler, it is a wise precaution always to keep a yard or two of spare line loose in the hand between the bottom ring and the reel. This precaution will not seldom save the loss of a fish.

The rod used for fly-fishing for Salmon, but with a somewhat stiffer top, and also the reel

and line, will answer every purpose for this kind of worm-fishing.

But there is another method of worm-fishing for Salmon, unpractised, so far as I am aware, and at any rate 'unpreached,' by any angler or angling writer, which, according to my experience, is as superior both in its practice and results to the system above described, as spinning is to gorge baiting.

This method consists of applying to Salmon the system of fine fishing already advocated for Trout, with three trifling differences only in tackle and bait.

1. Instead of a "brandling" or other small worm, the bait should be a *lob-worm*, large or small, according as the river is high or low, coloured or clear.
2. The hooks and trace should be similar in every respect to the Trout tackle, but with hooks *one or two sizes larger* (only), as the bait is a large or small one; and instead of a small shot or two to weight the trace, a sinker should be used of sufficient weight to carry the bait lightly down to the bottom of the run or pool. Small paternoster leads

(smoked to prevent their glittering) are most convenient for this purpose, and they should be attached to the main trace, about two feet above the hooks, by means of a horsehair loop, which will both admit of a ready change of leads, to suit the varying depths of the different casts, and, where a "foul" occurs, which it frequently does, will, as a last resort, break at a less strain than the main line, and thus save the latter. The lob-worm should be put on quite straight, like a Trout worm, the upper hook near the knot, and the tail hook lower down. *The thicker the hooks are in the wire the better.* The stroke, a gentle one, should follow immediately on a bite, or more often on a suspicious stoppage being perceived.

I have repeatedly caught Salmon with this tackle in bright sun, and in the clearest and finest water, and after all other methods of fishing, including the ordinary worm practice, had failed ; a slightly clouded water is, however, best. It is of course most important, especially in the former case, that the angler should carefully keep out of

sight ; and, if possible, always *below* the spot which the bait is fishing. This is almost a *sine quâ non* with this mode of fishing—than which I know nothing more truly “sporting” and sportsmanlike. The very fine hooks and tackle which must be used, and the nice manipulation of the line and bait required to insure success, entitle it to a front place in the Angler’s Arcana.

THE END.

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