THE WALTON TRADITION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

by

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Abstract

The co-purposes of this thesis are to demonstrate why angling literature qualifies as a subject worthy of serious study, and to explore the nature of the tradition of angling literature of the nineteenth century. Although the focus is on nineteenth century works, many earlier writings have been discussed. Of the pre-1800 authors discussed, the most important is Izaak Walton--The Father of Anglers. It is believed that the thesis demonstrates that Walton greatly influenced his followers.

To identify "The Walton Tradition in the Nineteenth Century," and to trace Walton's impact on nineteenth century writers on angling, extensive reading was required. Of 150-odd books on angling examined, more than 100 belong to the nineteenth century. More than one-half of them have been listed in the bibliography. The titles were gleaned from angling writers themselves, from those who wrote about angling writers, and from bibliographies on angling works. Scarce as it is, most of the important critical material available on the subject has also been listed in a bibliography.

As the research progressed, it became quickly apparent that angling literature could be sub-divided into several broad categories. These divisions are reflected in the chapter headings which follow. It also became apparent that, at bottom, most of the major authors--and many of the minor writers--consciously or
unconsciously shared remarkably similar attitudes toward the pursuit of angling.

It became evident, for example, that the writers view angling itself as both an art and a virtuous pastime; that they rate personal experience with, and commitment to, angling as being more important than originality of expression about angling; that they concern themselves with both the facts and the philosophy of angling; that they believe the complete angler must be both active and contemplative; that they respect nature; and that they recognize how angling can help man to be re-created.
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Introduction

There are two primary reasons why serious studies of angling literature should never be undertaken by the easily discouraged. Firstly, the subject's mass of material is overwhelming. Secondly, critical material on the subject is almost non-existent. Nevertheless the field should not be ignored. Nor should all angling literature be dismissed as artless; that would be as foolish as dismissing all novels simply because most of them are less than artful. The determined investigator will gradually discover that there is indeed merit in his study, that there is indeed much of value to be gleaned from angling works.

This study focuses on sixty British angling books of the nineteenth century. In addition to giving a representative idea of the century's angling literature, these sixty works also demonstrate the very considerable impact of Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*. Even if some of the forty writers (significantly, more than half of them are listed in the *Dictionary of National Biography*) are not directly indebted to Walton, they express ideas and emotions that were first, or best, articulated by gentle Izaak. For this reason alone, it seemed appropriate to title this study "The Walton Tradition in the Nineteenth Century."
The organization plan of this study is straightforward. The sixty works have been separated into four classifications—"Rambles," "Handbooks," "Sketches and Songs," and "Principals." An explanation for including the various works under each particular heading occurs at the commencement of each chapter. The works of the first two chapters are examined chronologically. Because such an approach would have rendered the last two chapters particularly confusing, a modified chronological plan was followed in those two chapters. The modifications are explained at the beginning of each of the two chapters.

For any of the determined who might wish to pursue the topic further, several addenda to this study might prove helpful. In addition to the primary- and secondary-source alphabetical bibliographies are a chronological bibliography and two appendices. The chronological bibliography lists works according to their first publication date. One of the appendices provides biographical information; the other lists the pseudonyms used by various of the writers discussed.

To understand better the "Walton tradition" and the angling books of the nineteenth century, it is helpful to go back into the history of English language sporting books. That history begins with Edward Duke of York's Master of Game (C. 1406), itself largely a translation of Count Gaston de Foix's Livre de Chasse. The history of English language angling books begins with
the Treatyse of Fysshynge with an Angle, which survives in two basic versions, each of which was apparently transcribed from a now-lost original. The older version survives in a single manuscript copied in about 1450, and the second was printed in 1496 by Wynkyn de Word as a supplement to the second Book of St. Albans. Custom, not certainty, credits the Treatise to a legendary nun, Dame Juliana Berners.

Dame Juliana leaned heavily on the past. Structurally, her three-part Treatise echoes MasterFrosGame, indeed, did The Compleat Angler. The prologue emphasizes the merits of angling; the instruction explains where, when, and how to fish, and the epilogue commends the book to the public and re-emphasizes the prologue. Dame Juliana also followed a Middle Ages' tradition that called for writings to have both moral and practical application. Dame Juliana is the first to write on the virtues, pleasures, and ethics of angling. Angling gives man "health of the soul," which causes him to be both holy and "rich...in goodness." Furthermore, angling not only led to a full life and merry spirits, but required no repentance afterwards. And, while fishing, the angler benefited from viewing the beauty and harmony of nature. As to ethics, Dame Juliana said: anglers should only fish a poor man's private water with both his permission and his good will; anglers should not break a man's fish traps or hedges; anglers should shut gates behind them, anglers should not fish for material gain; and anglers should "conserve the fish in the water."
The next important angling work is the anonymous *Arte of Angling*, published in 1577 and rediscovered in London in 1954 by Carl Otto von Kienbusch. With the rediscovery of the *Arte* came a revival of the question of plagiarism which had also occurred in the early attention given to Walton's *Compleat Angler*. Whether Walton can be condemned as a plagiarist is moot. It must be remembered that in those less sensitive times, borrowing and pirating were popular sports in themselves, and that, at best, Walton was but a faint shadow compared to earlier masters of pillage. What cannot be denied is that he drew heavily from the *Arte*. As Arnold Gingrich says:

This little book, which has somehow escaped being recorded anywhere at all, is in general structure the exact prototype of the first edition of *The Compleat Angler*, being a series of episodes, in dialogue form, with two characters, Piscator and Viator, and with the former undertaking the instruction of the latter. After the first edition, Walton changed his Viator to Venator and added a third character, Coridon. Cotton, on the other hand, when he wrote Part Two for the fifth edition of *The Compleat Angler*, stayed with the original two characters of the first edition, Piscator and Viator.

Much has been made of the number of exactly parallel passages between *The Arte of Angling* and *The Compleat Angler*, and it would be fair to say that it does, in its general structure and outline, bear very nearly as much resemblance to the first edition of Walton's work as that simple little first edition itself bears to the greatly expanded fifth edition.

[But their differences are even more telling.] The unknown author of *The Arte* is crude and blunt where Walton is subtle and sensitive, and ... the earlier unknown's humor comes in quick short jibes, whereas Walton's flows on as gently and continually as ... 'these silent silver streams which we now see glide so quietly by us.'
Hard on the heels of The Arte was Leonard Mascall's Booke of Fishing with a Hooke and Line. First published in 1590, this little volume "was cribbed nearly bodily from Juliana, but [Mascall] did, notably at that early date, add a section on fish culture." The Secrets of Angling, by John Dennys, a truly important work and the first successful verse treatment on the subject of angling, appeared in 1613. Dennys was clearly a talented angler, scholar, and poet. In an 1883 "Introduction" to Secrets, Thomas Westwood has this to say:

... so replete is it, in its higher moods, with subtlety of rhythm, sweetness of expression, and elevation of thought and feeling, that even from the angling point of view, we cannot but consider it a notable piece of condescension, and marvel at the devotion of so much real poetic genius to a theme so humble. With the exception of the Compleat Angler, no higher compliment than this poem has been paid to the sport.

Throughout Secrets, the influence of Dame Juliana Berners is unmistakable. The didactic element in the Treatise becomes full blown in Denny's work, and the purposes of praising the sport and instructing the angler are continued. The pattern is established in the opening stanza:

Of Angling, and the Art thereof, I sing,
What kinds of Tooles it doth behoue to haue;
And with what pleasing bayt a man may bring
The Fish to bite within the watry waue.
A worke of thankes to such as in a thing
Of harmlesse pleasure, haue regard to saue
Their dearest soules from sinne; and may intend
Of pretious time, some part thereon to spend.

Dennys' respect for tradition was not so slavish that he merely presented a conventional landscape gleaned from literary sources. He had direct experience with nature, and his experience obviously
influenced his outlook. It is significant that Dennys shows that nature can be the catalyst that prods man to contemplate the beyond:

I count it better pleasure to behold
The goodly compasse of the loftie Skye,
And in the midst thereof like burning gold
The flaming Chariot of the worlds great eye;
The watry cloudes that in the ayre vprold
With sundry kindes of painted collours flie:
And fayre Aurora lifting vp her head
And blushing rise from old Titonus bed.

The lofty woods the forrests wide and long,
Adorned with leaues and branches fresh and greene,
In whose coole bow'rs the birds with chaunting song,
Doe welcome with thin quire the Summers Queene,
The meadowes faire where Flora's guifts among,
Are intermixt the verdant grasse betweene,
The siluer skaled fish that softlie swimme,
Within the brookes and Cristall watry brimme.

With Secrets, one can go on and on. Humble though his theme might be, Dennys' sincerity and skill truly elevate his verse, if not also the pastime, to art. From first to last, Dennys is calm, contemplative, and confident. We leave him as we found him:

And now we are arrived at the last,
In wished harbour where we means to rest;
And make an end of this our journey past;
Here then in quiet roade I thinke it best
We strike our sailes and stedfast Anchor cast
For now the Sunne low setteth in the West,
And yeo Boat-Swaines, a merry Carroll sing,
To him that safely did vs hither bring.

Gervase Markham did not leave Dennys as he found him; he converted Secrets to prose the year after its publication. Markham's version, entitled The Pleasure of Princes, likely robbed Dennys of much popularity. Following Mascall's example, Markham also expanded the text, but unlike Mascall, Markham did
not bother being original in what he added. He merely lifted the extra passages from Dame Juliana's Treatise.\textsuperscript{13}

In 1651, two years before The Compleat Angler, a handbook by Thomas Barker was published. Barker's Delight, like the Arte of 1577, is largely important because of its relationship to Walton's work. Barker was Walton's guide on matters of cooking fish, and fly-fishing and fly-tying. He was also the first to mention fishing reels, and to advise "fishing fine for trout,"\textsuperscript{14} an idea later extended by Charles Cotton to fishing "fine and far out," and for which Cotton became famous.

Although there are some who would downgrade angling, none can deny that The Compleat Angler is the best-known sporting book of all time. By the end of 1935, it had appeared in 284 different editions in English. Since then, it has had two or three editions annually.\textsuperscript{15} One of the early—and largely correct—complaints about The Compleat Angler was that it did not add anything particularly new to the storehouse of technical information on the art of angling. But, it is unlikely that Walton's readership ever relied much upon his storehouse of information anyway. Walton is valued, rather, because he is an "idyllist, a moralist, an observer of nature and a master of a prose style which lives because it is individual."\textsuperscript{16} The charm of The Compleat Angler is largely that behind the printed page stands Walton himself, "shrewd, and critical, but also tolerant and kindly."\textsuperscript{17} Though it has been called "one of the most joyous pastorals ever composed in any language,"\textsuperscript{18} The Compleat Angler clearly reflects neither its day nor its author's
life. Walton's England was

wracked with civil war: brother fought
brother; father fought son. And worse,
this turmoil split his own church, which
he loved. He was a royalist to the core and his
king was defeated in battle, tried and beheaded!
Friends were dismissed from church and school.
Beyond this, there were personal tragedies. He
was left fatherless at two and a half; his
first wife died following childbirth after four-
teen years of marriage and of their six boys and
one daughter, all died in infancy or early
childhood. 

It might well be wondered why nothing "could destroy the spirit of
innocent mirth with which [Walton] continued to evoke the rustic
pleasures and honest enjoyments of the angler's life...." 

Walton's mirth is of a soft smiling nature, and under-
neath his surface humor there is often a deceptively gentle
yet important current of truth. In excusing himself from discussing
the multitude of sub-species of flying insects, Walton, speaking
through Piscator, says to Venator that there are "too many either
for me to name or for you to remember; and their breeding is so
various and wonderful, that I might easily amaze myself, and
tire you in a relation of them." 

In "moralizing his song," Walton deals with man in relation
to nature, to God, and to the gentle art itself. He sees a
considerable concord between man, nature, and Divinity. The
Divine Plan is revealed through external nature. Walton
emphasizes the point early in his treatise by having his hawker
(falconer), Auceps, heap praise on the nightingale:
He that at midnight, when the very labourer sleeps securely, should hear, as I have very often, the clear aire, the short descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted from earth, and say: "Lord what musick hast thou provided for the saints in heaven, when thou affordest bad men such musick on Earth!"  

That nature can teach man how to live is explicit in Piscator's "Song," stanza four of which reads:

I care not, I to fish the seas,  
Fresh rivers best my mind do please,  
Whose sweet calm courses I contemplate,  
And seek in life to imitate:  
In civil bounds I fain would keep,  
And for my past offences weep.

Here Walton's concept of the contemplative man is as clear as is the stream he chooses to fish. The "sweet," "calm" waters are more pleasing because they are the touchstones to contemplation. The calm waters do not resist their "bounds." Walton's message is that man, too, can learn to live within natural limits. To overstep is to "offend." The implication, expressed so aptly by eighteenth century writers, is that an offence against nature is also an offence against God.  

As a naturalist, Walton recognized the hazards of overharvesting a natural resource, which he called wasteful. He particularly disliked offences such as the netting of undersized fish, and "above all, the taking Fish in Spawning-time...." Both practices are equally repugnant to the ethical angler of the twentieth century. Yet some of the truths seen by Walton three hundred years ago are still not universally understood by the angling fraternity. Many anglers of this century are still unaware that
large trout often take the hook "not from hunger but wantonness," and that autopsy suggests that anadromous species fast when on their upstream migration.

Understandably, Walton was not right in every particular. But, where he was wrong, his error often stemmed from his repeating either popular authorities, or popular opinion. Hence, in echoing the "romantic" myth that the tench was the "Physician of the Brook," Walton does not deserve severe censure. Nor should he be condemned for quoting an extant belief he credits to Drayton. According to this myth, the salmon, when confronted by an almost insurmountable barrier,

\[\text{His tail takes in his mouth, and bending like a bow}
\text{That's to full compass drawn, aloft himself doth throw...}\]

The latter sentiment is scarcely less valid because of its error. Walton's primary purpose was to illustrate the compulsion that draws a salmon to its final river-bed ritual, a force that is as all-consuming as is any human drive.

The Compleat Angler, though primarily a dialogue presentation in prose, is liberally interspersed with verse. Some has already been quoted. Much is of high quality. Some is of uncertain authorship. Most is acknowledged. Where Walton is uncertain of the authorship, he may guess, which he does when quoting from Secrets. (He names Jo Davers as the poet.) Well-known men of letters—such as Wotton, Herbert, Donne, Christopher [Kit] Marlowe, and Sir Walter Raleigh—also appear in The Compleat Angler. The last-named pair of poets are credited with the
"Milkmaid's Song," and "The Milkmaid's Mother's Answer" respectively, poems that today are better-known as "The Passionate Shepherd to his Love," and "The Nymph's Reply." The Donne work, patterned after the "songs" of Marlowe and Raleigh, is poetic praise of the tranquility of angling, and likely was written expressly for The Compleat Angler. The first stanza is sufficient to illustrate the apt softness of Donne's verse:

```
Come, live with me, and be my love
And we will some new pleasures prove
Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,
With silken lines and silver hooks. 29
```

Some of the anonymous verses may have been composed by Walton. Likely candidates are the songs sung by the happy company at the close of day three. Coridon's songs begins:

```
Oh, the sweet contentment
The countryman doth find!
Heigh trolöllie lollie loe,
Heigh trolollie lee,
That quiet contemplation
Possesseth all my mind:
Then care away,
And wend along with me. 30
```

The promised rejoinder, entitled "The Angler's Song," is the better-known and is quoted in later angling works (for example, it appears, with some alteration, in R. Brooke's The Arte of Angling, published in 1720). The first stanza follows:

```
As inward love breeds outward talk,
The hounds some praise, and some the halk:
Some, better pleased with private sport,
Use tennis, some a mistress court:
But these delights I neither wish,
Nor envy, while I freely fish. 31
```
Neither the sentiment nor the mood need explanation. It is worth noting, however, that the latter verse echoes Dame Juliana's argument in which angling was placed on a higher level than either of the chivalric sports of hunting or hawking.

In 1676, when Walton was eighty-three years old, the fifth edition of *The Compleat Angler* was published. This edition was all-important because it introduced Charles Cotton to the angling world. In his portion of the work, Cotton continues the dialogue method and conversational tone, though perhaps not so smoothly as had his mentor. In Part Two, Piscator becomes Piscator Junior, which change emphasizes the father-son relationship that existed between Walton and Cotton. Cotton also echoes Walton's defence of the art of angling, and Walton's stated preference of the country over the city. In "The Retirement," a poem dedicated to Walton, Cotton first turns his back on the city, then sings the praise of country life and solitude. The first stanza sets the tone:

Farewell thou busie World, and may
We never meet again:
Here I can eat, and sleep, and prey,
And do more good, in one short day,
Than he who his whole age out wears
Upon the most conspicuous theatres,
Where nought but vanity and vice appears.

Although Cotton is more concerned with his reader's craft than with his morals, and although he teaches more and preaches less than does Walton, he nevertheless does not believe that the title "angler" should be indiscriminately bestowed.
He "that cannot kill a Trout of twenty inches long with two [strands of horse-hair line], in a river clear of wood and weeds ...
deserves not the name of an Angler." Cotton does not completely
ignore ethics, however. Commenting on a small trout that has
just been caught, Piscator Junior says: "This is a diminutive
gentleman, e'en throw him in again, and let him grow till he
be worthy of your anger."

Following Cotton, angling literature went into a one-
hundred-fifty year slumber. A spark of the Walton tradition was
kept alive in various handbooks and verse sketches of the eighteenth
century, but it was not until the nineteenth century revival that
the spark came to true life. Even the best-read handbook of
the eighteenth century—Charles Bowlker's *Art of Angling*, 1758—
only rarely ventures into the contemplative mood or matter that
Walton fathered. The best of the verse sketches are found in
Alexander Pope's *Windsor Forest* (1713), John Gay's *Rural Sports*
(also 1713), and James Thomson's *Spring* (1746). Pope is balanced
and clever, but rather too vague and conventional to be repeated
here. And since several lines from Thomson's spring are quoted
early in the "Handbook" chapter there is no need to quote a
sample here. The following lines (149-154) of Gay's *Rural Sports*
suggest not only that Gay had a quick and discriminating eye,
but that he actually wrote from first-hand experience. The
Angler-reader will quickly credit the description as a stand-out:

Far up the stream the twisted hair he throws,
Which down the murm'ring current gently flows;
When if or chance or hunger's powerful sway
Directs the roving trout this fatal way,
He greedily sucks in the twining bait,
And tugs and nibbles the fallacious meat....
In the nineteenth century, the Walton tradition reawoke from its slumber. The following chapters explore that reawakening. Nor should the reawakening be misunderstood. It was not a reincarnation of Walton's style or substance; it was a revival of his spirit. It was not sudden; it was gradual. And it came at a time when fish and opportunities for fishing were becoming increasingly hard to come by.

To determine more closely what the Walton tradition of the nineteenth century is, it is helpful to know what it is not. It is not, for example, a pure pastoral form. Although *The Compleat Angler* has its country folk—as do other angling works—the people of the country are clearly of secondary importance. Nor does the tradition espouse the virtues of country life. Rather, it praises a rural pursuit, a recreation that is unavailable in the city, but which is available to the city man who visits the country. And, what is more, the tradition largely focuses on how the city gentleman can and does benefit from the pursuit of angling.

At its center, the Walton tradition is a statement of the love of angling. Walton makes the point clearly in his "Epistle to the Reader:" "...I wish the Reader...to take notice, that in writing [*The Compleat Angler*] I have made myself a recreation of a recreation...." The love of angling cannot be borrowed; it is personal. And so it is that to be within the Walton tradition, an angling book must express a direct and deep commitment to the art of angling. In a very real sense, the
true Waltonian writes a confession of his love—as does Walton:
"...yet the whole Discourse is, or rather was, a picture of my
own disposition, especially in such days and times as I have laid
aside business, and gone a-fishing...."  

Perhaps, as Walton and many of his followers suggest,
the love of angling is an inherited love. Perhaps, too, the
Waltonian inherits the desire—though not necessarily the
skill—to share both his love for and his knowledge about angling.
Certainly Walton's willingness to share is overtly or covertly
echoed in angling books that follow The Compleat Angler. Walton,
speaking through Piscator to Venator, says: "...I will hide
nothing from you that I can remember, and can think may help you
forward towards a perfection of this art."  

In order to help others, in order to justify the giving of advice to others,
the teacher must have closely studied that which he attempts to
impart. The how-to-do-it focus of many angling works stresses
the desire to communicate information, but handbook authors fail
to attain the Waltonian standard simply because they do not
discuss the motives underlying the recreation.

The true Waltonian author concerns himself with both
the facts and the philosophy of fishing. He experiences, loves,
and imitates nature; he views angling as an art, not just as a
pastime; as a route to virtue, not just as a route to idle pleasure;
as a means of recreating the self, not just as a means of escaping
urban strife. To be a Waltonian, then, it is necessary both to
act and to think. Walton's explanation of the two elements deserves quoting:

And for that, I shall tell you, that in ancient times a debate hath risen, and it remains yet unresolved, whether the happiness of man in this world doth consist more in contemplation or action? Concerning which, some have endeavoured to maintain their opinion of the first; by saying, that the nearer we mortals come to God by way of imitation, the more happy we are. And they say, that God enjoys himself only, by a contemplation of his own infiniteness, eternity, power, and goodness, and the like. And upon this ground, many cloisteral men of great learning and devotion, prefer contemplation before action. And many of the fathers seem to approve this opinion, as may appear in their commentaries upon the words of our Saviour to Martha.

And on the contrary, there want not men of equal authority and credit, that prefer action to be the more excellent; as namely, experiments in physick, and the application of it, both for the ease and prolongation of man's life; by which each man is enabled to act and do good to others, either to serve his country, or do good to particular persons: and they say also, that action is doctrinal, and teaches both art and virtue, and is a maintainer of human society; and for these, and other like reasons, to be preferred before contemplation.

Concerning which two opinions I shall forbear to add a third, by declaring my own; and rest myself contented in telling you, my very worthy friend, that both these meet together, and do most properly belong to the most honest, ingenious, quiet, and harmless art of angling.

Because most, if not all, of the nineteenth century's angling books are in some way indebted to Walton, it follows that, in varying degrees, they belong to the Walton tradition. **Degree** is the critical word. For example, the works discussed in the "Handbook" chapter often illustrate the personal experience and knowledge so much valued by Walton, but they seldom deal with the philosophical matter that Walton valued even more. The failure
to deal with the philosophy of angling limits the degree to which
the handbook can be considered truely Waltonian. Similarly,
though the works discussed in the "Rambles" chapter do deal with
the philosophy of angling, they do so in only a piecemeal fashion.
For this reason, and because they often include so much non-
fishing matter, the "rambles" fail to make a recreation of a
recreation--and hence cannot be considered in the mainstream of
the Walton tradition.

Authors of the "sketches," "songs," or "principal"
works, on the other hand, are far more successful in presenting
the substance of angling to the reader. They are clearly more
attentive to both the philosophical considerations of the angling
art, and the descriptions of the recreation itself. In
addition to speaking from personal experience and focusing firmly
on fishing matters, these authors exhibit an undeniably strong
affection for the gentle art.

Both the prose and verse statements of angling authors
of the nineteenth century may occasionally strike the reader as
lacking in originality. Silver streams, purling brooks, sparkling
water, crystal pools, mirrored surfaces, fragrant meadows, and
twitches of the wrist abound. The explanation lies partly
in the fact that the angler-writer seems to have a remarkable
respect for the traditions of the art. There, is, it seems, a
strong link between the writer and what he views a permanent,
or stable. (Even today, West Coast anglers refer-to fish as
being silver-bright, or silver as a dollar--long after the silver
dollar has been all but relegated to history.) The angler-writer is, perhaps, a verbal conservative. Certainly he is a natural conservative. Certainly, too, he is against that which threatens his recreation. Perhaps he unconsciously uses the language of earlier writers in an attempt to regain the long-since-spoiled Eden, or to express the universal and undying attraction of a now-threatened recreation. Perhaps he feels less need to be original than he does to express the time-established joys and virtues of angling. Nor should the personal be confused with the original. Walton was certainly personal enough, but he clearly found it unnecessary to introduce newness for its own sake. Indeed, the Father of Angling respected authorities of the past almost as much as he respected the gentle art itself. It was not so much in his matter or in his images that Walton was unique, but in his gentle spirit, in his contemplative mood. In varying degrees, and often through the use of traditional images and metaphors, the writers of the songs, sketches, and principal works find their way into the mainstream of the Walton tradition.

The fact that many angling works of the nineteenth century are well worth studying is evidence of the sureness with which the new Waltonian spirit took hold. The last-studied author of the nineteenth century—Lord Grey of Fallodon—wrote nearly two and one-half centuries after Walton. To Grey, fly-fishing was a most worthy recreation because the fly-fisher is always seeing, doing, and learning something—certainly a Waltonian outlook. In Grey's view, too, the angler's pursuit "seems more
than imperfect man can deserve or comprehend," and the gentle art is often "too subtle in some of its forms to be analyzed, too intimate to be explained"—both of which sentiments are genuinely Waltonian. And, in exactly the same way as Grey's respect for Walton hinges largely on Walton's simplicity and purity, so, too, the modern reader's respect for Grey stems from the same virtues.

Because the attempt, here, is to illustrate both the awakening and Walton's impact on writers of angling works, the content, tone, and historical relationships of the angling works have been considered. And because the flavor of the works is best illustrated by the works themselves, original sources are extensively quoted. Several interesting and obvious sub-themes remain undeveloped simply because it is beyond the scope of this study to investigate them thoroughly. Nevertheless, it is significant that several of the writers studied here became increasingly contemplative as they aged; that many were deeply indebted to their contemporaries, or to earlier authors of angling works, or both; that several coteries of angling writers developed; and that increased fishing pressure and other problems strongly influenced many authors. It should also be observed that whereas books of a handbook nature dominated the first half of the nineteenth century, philosophic considerations became increasingly evident in the second half of the century. And, as the century aged, angling writers became more and more concerned with their environment, with fish culture, with natural science, and with codifying principles of an angling ethic.
Footnotes


3 Ibid., p. 27.

4 McClane, p. 105.

5 McDonald, p. 31.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid., p. 18.


11 Ibid., p. 32-33.

12 Ibid., p. 61.

13 McDonald, p. 33.


15 Gingrich, p. 222.
16 Hills, p. 61.

17 Ibid., p. 63.

18 McClane, p. 973.


20 McClane, p. 974.


22 Walton, p. 16.

23 Ibid., p. 78.

24 Ibid., p. 49.

25 Ibid., p. 61.

26 Ibid., p. 62.

27 Ibid., p. 149.

28 Ibid., p. 115.

29 Ibid., p. 154.

30 Ibid., p. 76.

31 Ibid., p. 77.


33 Ibid., p. 32.

34 Ibid., p. 42.
On page sixteen of *A History of Fly Fishing for Trout* (New York, 1921), John Waller Hills says that Bowlker's *Art* had "sixteen editions or more, a record surpassed [only by] the *Treatise* and *The Compleat Angler.*"

36 Walton, p. 5.

37 Ibid., p. 6.

38 Ibid., p. 180.

39 Ibid., p. 28.


41 Ibid., p. 144.
"The Rambles"

The title of this chapter suggests the nature of the thirteen books to be discussed. The basic contention here is that all thirteen are too narrowly focused, too broadly focused, or too unfocused to earn particular credit as angling literature. Despite this, it would be misleading to suggest that none is worth reading, that none contributes to an understanding of angling literature of the nineteenth century, or that none illustrates a debt to the father of angling, Izaak Walton.

A cursory examination is enough to show that the authors value angling as an art, and that they accord the highest praise to the most artistic form of angling—fly-fishing. Concern for truth, beauty, information, and observation are also quickly apparent. The writers seem as convinced, though not as convincing, as Walton, that angling is virtuous, that country pursuits contribute to good health, and that periodic escape from the city's turmoil revitalizes man. In varying degrees, the writers encourage their readers to consider the advantages of the simple life, to share their knowledge and experience with others, and to see the virtue in the peaceful or contemplative mood. Overtly or covertly, the authors teach that angling can instruct man to respect and respond to nature, and to appreciate the value
Of hope.

Of the ten writers considered here, seven published before the nineteenth century's midpoint. Two of the remaining three published in the 1850's. For reasons which might later become obvious, four works by the remaining author are discussed; these works were published from 1892 to 1904.

The earliest work considered here, Thomas Williamson's The Complete Angler's Vade-Mecum, was published in 1808. Although Williamson takes time to rate fly-fishing as the acme of the art—"without doubt, the most cleanly, pleasing, most elegant, and most difficult part of the science!"—it is his science as a float-fisherman that deserves special mention. In three paragraphs he explains the principles of float-fishing, and his explanation is as valid today as it was one and one-half centuries ago. The reader who is at all conscious of the accuracy of Williamson's observations, must also be more than casually impressed with the clarity of his case:

The principles on which every float should be made are, first, that it should sustain the weight of the shot and bait; second, that it should pass easily under the water when a fish bites; third, that the part above water should not be top heavy. The absence of any one of these requisites renders the float useless. For if it cannot sustain the appended weights, it must sink, and cannot be a float; if it does not yield freely to the smallest effort of the fish to take the bait down, it will not only fail to indicate the time for striking, but it will so far oppose the fish as to cause alarm, and consequent disappointment. If your float does not stand erect, you never can judge of the depth of water, nor can you draw your line tight enough to be in readiness to strike, at the moment when the fish may have taken the bait into his mouth.
In addition to his rather disappointing diagrams (even for the period) of fish and tackle, and his information on tackle, fishing methods, and fish species, Williamson repeats several often-mentioned-but-incorrect assumptions. One of the more popular myths he accepts is that, preparatory to leaping over obstacles, salmon increase their jumping ability by bending themselves into a bow shape by clamping their tails into their mouths. Williamson evidently believed that in releasing their mouth-grips, the salmon sprang up like suddenly-released springs.

Richard Penn's Maxims and Hints for an Angler and Miseries of Fishing, a small two-part volume published in 1833, deals with several of the more common truths about the angling art. The book's first portion—"Maxims and Hints"—lists some common enough axioms, for example, axiom XIII:

Remember that, in whipping with the artificial fly, it must have time, when you have drawn it out of the water, to make the whole circuit, and to be at one time straight behind you, before it can be driven out straight before you. If you give it the forward impulse too soon, you will hear a crack. Take this as a hint that your fly is gone to grass. 3

The second portion—"Miseries of Fishing"—lists some common-enough mishaps:

Leading a large fish down-stream and arriving at a ditch, the width of which is evident, although the depth of it may be a matter of some doubt. Having thus to decide very quickly whether you will lose the fish and half your tackle, or run the risk of going up to your neck in mud. Perhaps both. 4

Although the axioms are sound enough, and the mishaps true enough
to angling, and although the light-hearted tone is unmistakeable, neither half of the book is likely to elicit more than a rather tired agreement from the reader.

Thomas Medwin's two-volume *The Angler in Wales, or Days and Nights of Sportsmen*, published in 1834, is likely to elicit the same response as does Penn's *Maxims*. *The Angler* can be described as a loosely-connected rambling. It touches on all manner of non-angling topics—travel, literature, morality, encounters with pigs, bulls, and elephants—and the turns in the unravelling of the book are as unpredictable as the resting place of a fly cast into a howling gale.

Medwin touches on the philosophy of angling in a rather incidental fashion. Early in the first volume, he implies, rather than states, that country surroundings provide peace of mind and enrichment for the soul. On two of the few occasions where he seems to focus firmly on the fishing matters, he carefully points out that hope is the angler's essential quality, and that fly-fishing is the most artistic form of angling.

Though not artistic, Medwin's pot pourri might well interest the reader with catholic tastes. On occasion, he is almost humourous; more often, he is serious, sentimental, or downright melancholy. Several prose and verse passages are gloomy gothic. In one anecdote, the mistress of a man convicted of assault drowns in the very pool beside which her lover was apprehended. The fact that a river was involved in the tale likely was justification enough for Medwin to retell the tale
in a book that was presumably intended to deal with angling subjects. Long after the reader has been exposed to a host of digressions, Medwin says that he will take a hint from Byron—and digress. Even the most patient reader is apt to doubt that a reference to an all-time great digression expert—Fielding, say—could save Medwin from a charge of artless rambling.

Thomas Boosey's *Piscatorial Reminiscences and Gleanings*, first published in 1835, contains a wide range of interesting information. In addition to following the quite-usual practice of quoting widely from other authors, Boosey also includes an extensive annotated bibliography, or "Catalogue of Books" on angling literature. The bibliography alone is worth the attention of the inquiring reader. Among the discoveries to be made there is that Boosey was aware that the crisply-written *Angler, a Poem in Ten Cantos* (claimed by T.P. Lathy, and dated 1819) is a "rifacimento of The Anglers' Eight Dialogues in Verse, without acknowledgment."

*Piscatorial Gleanings* is obviously the work of a writer who is highly experienced in both the art of angling and the literature of the art. Structurally, the work is a collection of short items dealing with fish and fishing. In a chapter entitled "Anecdotes of Fishes and Fishing," Boosey quotes several passages that are as pertinent or interesting today as they were nearly one and one-half centuries ago. The warning to non-swimmers from the *Supplement to Daniels Rural Sports* is materially little different to the sink-proofing techniques recommended today:
An accidental fall into water may be most dangerous to those ignorant of the art of swimming. By observing the directions given here, a person may save himself from drowning: if he falls into deep water, he will rise to the surface by floatage, and will continue there, if he does not elevate his hands; and the keeping them down is essential to his safety. If he moves his hands under the water, in any way he pleases, his head will rise so high as to allow him free liberty to breathe; and if in addition he moves his legs, exactly as in the action of walking up stairs, his shoulders will rise above the water, so that he may use less exertion with his hands, or apply them to other purposes.\[^{11}\]

By quoting a passage from the *Magazine of Natural History* (vol. VII, p. 43), Boosey seems to be encouraging his angler-readers to be open-minded about happenstances that might initially sound too far-fetched to be true, and to reflect on how truly phenomenal nature is:

> A young gentleman walking in Mr. Longster's garden, at Malton, on the banks of the Derwent, saw a fine pike suddenly dart out of the river, and seize a swallow that was gliding along the surface of the water. The sun might be so low as to place the bird's shadow in advance of the bird itself, and thus give the pike an advantage.\[^{12}\]

In his own reflections about angling, Boosey points out both the virtue of the art's longevity—"fishing seems to have preceded all other sports"\[^{13}\]—and the virtue of the quiet art itself. To make the latter point, Boosey quotes from several respected authorities. His quotation from Walton, like many truths, is not diminished by frequent repetition:

> No life, my honest scholar, no life so happy, so pleasant, as the life of a well governed angler,—there we sit in cowslips, hear the birds sing, and possess ourselves in as much quietness as these silver streams which we now see glide so quietly by us.\[^{14}\]
In *The Moor and the Loch*, first published in 1840, John Colquhoun agrees with Boosey and Walton that the angler's life is indeed a happy one, but Colquhoun's agreement is based on a very different philosophical point of view. And, although it would be wrongheaded to suggest that Colquhoun is not a thinker, it is certainly evident that he is not a quiet, contemplative thinker. His enthusiasm for angling more closely resembles the muscular enthusiasm of writers like Charles Kingsley and Christopher North (Professor Wilson). Colquhoun, who studied under Professor North, argues that the real value of angling (and hunting) stems from its ability to excite man, and that it is excitement that raises man from mundane thoughts and deeds.

In Volume I of his two-volume work, Colquhoun takes issue with the "modern" poets because they had no enthusiasm for field sports or sportsmen: "Cowper hated both. The Lake poets, in spite of their jubilant admiration of nature in all its wilder freaks and aspects, simply ignored them." The volume focuses on hunting (seals, deer, upland birds, and waterfowl), hawking, and poaching. Colquhoun even smuggles in some anti-English sentiments. He argues, for example, that the Scottish poacher—unlike the English poacher—is not a "hardened, unscrupulous blackguard, who would shoot the game-keeper with greater pleasure than he would a pheasant."

Volume II, an equally entertaining work, is devoted to angling matters. Handbook information is mixed with anecdote, folk-lore, and philosophy. Colquhoun accurately predicts that
unrestricted netting of salmon rivers will reduce sport and commercial catches, and postulates that, "when even contemplative Walton had fairly landed a gorgeous fish...the triumph of success swallowed up every other pleasure." Nevertheless, Colquhoun also admits that the philosophy or poetry of angling attracted many great minds, and that it is unthinkable that a true angler would not also be a lover of nature:

if not, he loses half the pleasure of his art. In following the river's course, he must of necessity pass through the finest and most varied scenery; and that, too, at a time when beauty crowns the year. But, enchanting as are the woodland banks of the quiet stream, there is to me a higher and yet more powerful charm in the solitary wildness or savage grandeur of the Highland loch. The very stillness of those bare hills and craggy summits, broken only by the rushing of some rapid burn that intersects them, has a tendency to elevate, while it calms the mind; and I envy not the man who could frequent such scenes and not feel them.

Charles White's Sporting Scenes and Country Characters, though published in the same year as Moor and the Loch, shares little else with the latter work. With Medwin's Angler, it shares the distinction of saying relatively little about angling, but unlike Medwin, White does not use the scattergun approach; he assembles his fishing matter into one thirty-page section, and he splits his focus evenly between handbook information and praise of the art.

True to the spirit of Walton, White concerns himself with both ethics and accuracy. Despite the fact that big catches were clearly praiseworthy in his day, White does recommend that the angler should exercise self-restraint, that he should take
only what "he deems sufficient for one day's diversion, reserving
the stores of the stream for others as well as for himself, until
some future occasion." Some of White's errors are excusable
on the grounds that time was necessary to uncover hidden truths,
but he should never have credited Walton with advising fly-
fishers to fish "fine and far off." Like so many other angler-
authors, White praises both fly-fishing and Walton. His chapter
on fishing begins with an elaborate praise for the Father of
Angling:

Honour to thy name, O Izaak Walton!—
the pure in soul, the good in heart—the kind,
the gentle, the patient—the ardent admirer of
Nature, and all her handiworks—the devotee of the
art—the great master, the generous preceptor of
the gentle craft—the patriarch of the brotherhood
of the angle!... So wert thou; not only the perfect
master of the gentle craft, and the bearer of the
meek and quiet spirit, but the leader of others who
tread in the same delightful path!

White's elaborate, or even stilted, style might irk the
modern-day reader, but his passion for nature, and his respect
for nature's impact on man are not likely to be soon outdated:

[The angler's] mind harmonises with the scene
around, in all its freshness and all its beauty,—
from the golden-fringed clouds above, that have
catched the first glances of the resplendent eye of
morning, to the dew-drop gems below, that deck
blade and branch, leaf and flower. Nor less with
every object around; the wide-spread valley, with its
ramparts of hills,—its greenaand dewy meadows...the
songsters of the feathered race... the venerable
village spire, that crowns the spot where "the rude
forefathers of the hamlet sleep,"—the ever tuneful
rills, that dance merrily towards the placid bosom
of the river, like a smiling child to the arms of
its endearing and joyous mother....
White concludes his chapter with a passage that blends statement, praise, and imagery:

On the opposite bank is a goodly array of willows and alders, bending, as it were, over a mirror to admire their own drooping beauty. Behind the fly-fisher all is clear. He knows that the fish are feeding upon the insects which drop from the boughs. "Whisk" goes his line. It is for a moment suspended. Admirable artist! How gracefully falls the tail-fly! A rise at the first throw? He rushes with tremendous impetuosity to make his escape. The fisher lets him go,—he turns him gently,—another and another effort is made to free himself from the hook....

Equally hyperbolic is Henry Phillips' *The True Enjoyment of Angling*, a month-by-month fishing calendar published in 1842. Phillips discusses only the months of March through September simply because the October-February period was not then considered part of the fishing season. An angling song, complete with musical score, is provided for each of the seven fishing months. Kindly critics might say that Phillips' eulogy of April is somewhat reminiscent of Chaucer. It is at least true that Phillips' message is hard to miss; he spells it out first in prose, then in verse:

I worship April; it is the harbinger of all the joys we are so constantly looking forward to: how proudly is the brow of nature lifted to receive its bridal May! How gaily is its head bedecked with every fragrant flower, that now buds forth, and promises to bloom! I like variety, so give me April, and ever may we praise it, as, with your attention, I will now attempt.

Sweet April, come, I love thy show'rs, Scented with early bloom and flow'rs, Alternate gloom, and sunshine bright, Morning of hope, and life's delight;
Joyous we tread thy spangled lawn
When April days begin to dawn,
And grateful oft we praise that Pow'r
Who gave the sunshine and the show'r.

In the second and only other stanza of "Aria," Phillips touches on the joys of angling. He compares the country sport to the city life, and finds the "courtly" world, or city, to be "dull" and "toilsome" compared to the country. He also points out an appearance-reality tension, and says that nature cannot endure the falseness of "fashion." The idea is fleshed out in the stanza's closing couplet:

We bask in joys not framed by art,
Own but one monarch--that's the heart.

Phillips italicizes "we" to draw attention to the angler's privileged position. The angler's joy is the joy that comes from recognizing untainted beauty; he rejoices in that which is, not in that which is merely represented to be attractive. Phillips idea seems to be that it is only the real, the unvarnished truth, that should stimulate man, and that therefore can be of the heart. And, as Phillips suggests in his first stanza, it is up to man to recognize that beauty exists in both sunshine and shower. Though his poetry does not rank as high art, Phillips's considerable craft is quickly visible in his handling of metrics, rhyme scheme, and ideas.

The philosophy of angling expressed in The True Enjoyment is a restatement of ideas that date back to Walton. Phillips acknowledges that "nothing can surpass [Walton's] beauty of
sentiment, his richness of ideas, or his simplicity, and perfection of life..." and goes on to say that, although fishing tackle and techniques may have advanced since Walton's time, man's "temper" has not. Fortunately, however, there is hope in the genuine angler:

the man who can enjoy our delightful recreation is heir to all those finer feelings [poetry, music, painting], or he is no Fisherman at heart....

Paradoxically, some of the Phillips's ideas are simultaneously old and new. Though angling writers have long questioned the competitive nature of city life, it is only within the last half century that Western man has truly begun to see that the work ethic might be blinding man to other delights. In his chapter on May, Phillips asks if he "can patiently view such artificial life [the ambition of the city-dweller], and gaze as coolly on the real?" He then says that although industry employs and rewards people, there is a certain sham to the "heedless mazy round" because the participants of the mazy round are unconscious of what they are doing; they are merely "fancying" themselves to be happy.

The reader who fancies that a book title identifies its contents can be as sadly misinformed as he who believes that hard work automatically leads to happiness. The Angling Friar and the Fish Which he Took by Hook and by Crook, a Comic Legend, by A. Novice, A.F. & F, and published in 1851, is neither comic, nor about angling. More accurately, it says precious little about angling, and it fails in its attempts to be humorous. Although it
is a verse work, it reminds of Medwin's Angler; it rambles through a variety of topics, none of which is particularly captivating. The reader is obliged to consider the trials and tribulations of a poor family, the life and times of friars in a monastery, and the joys and sorrows of a marriage party.

The Teesdale Angler, by R. Lakeland, might tease an anxious angler, but like the Friar, promises more than it performs. In the main, Lakeland deals with fly-fishing and fly-tying, but little of his commentary is particularly noteworthy. His discussion of roe bait, however, does deserve mention. In complaining that roe is so effective that roe-users need not be skilful to be successful, Lakeland echoes many other angler-authors. But Lakeland goes further; he suggests that because roe is so deadly, its use encourages poaching. And the case he made in 1858 has proven to be an altogether too-accurate prediction:

In concluding this notice of Roe, I cannot refrain from expressing a hope that gentlemen will abstain from the use of it. By the purchase of Roe they hold out a premium to Salmon poachers who annually destroy immense numbers of spawning fish solely for the sake of Roe, the high price which it commands encourages them in their illegal pursuits.31

Although nearly half a century separates Lakeland from the four remaining works to be considered here—all by Augustus Grimble—the earlier writers' concerns are still present in Shooting and Salmon Fishing: Hints and Recollections, Salmon Rivers of Scotland, Salmon Rivers of Ireland, and Salmon and Trout Rivers of England and Wales, published in 1892, 1902, 1903,
and 1904 respectively. (The last two works were each published in two volumes.) All are rather limited, but each makes a contribution to the pool of angling literature.

About one-third of *Shooting and Salmon Fishing* (chapter VI) is devoted to the gentle art. In addition to debating angling ethics, and pointing out wasteful practices (the gaffing of salmon kelts), Grimble observes that rod-wearied fish might die even when released ungaffed to their native element. Significantly, it is only in recent years that scientists have learned how the angler-fish battle creates toxic poisoning in certain game fish, and that toxic fatalities are far from uncommon. Although Grimble's philosophy of angling is not easily determined, he obviously held little respect for the "muffs" who took up salmon fishing merely because the easily-managed Malloch reel had been invented. 32

Grimble's *Salmon Rivers of Scotland* is best described as an angler's travelguide. Its main thrust is to detail the best fishing rivers, and the best times to fish them. Throughout the book, Grimble is concerned about the decline and fall of salmon fishing in Scotland, and the economics of both the sport and commercial fisheries. The same basic format and concerns appear in *Salmon Rivers of Ireland*, but this two-volume work is not easily put aside. In addition to the above-mentioned interests, *Salmon Rivers of Ireland* focuses on pollution, overharvesting, and other matters that have only in recent years become important to
Because Grimble's writing is distressingly free of imagery, metaphor, or other artistic devices, the reader is happily surprised when he encounters a list of pools—or "casts," or "throws"—which immediately evokes imaginative responses:


Although Grimble's style is reportorially stark, he can sometimes be very pleasing. And when both structure and sentiment of a sentence please the ear, he is doubly pleasing:

Tooour mind there is no greater drawback to an angling trip than to feel one is bound to be at a certain pool at an uncomfortably early hour or lose his chance; in fact, one might just as well be going to business every morning and hurrying to catch the train.

Grimble's conjecture about the behaviour of different races of salmon is likely to please many readers. It might be that for many authors of angling books—Grimble and Walton included—conjecture often springs from an unconscious awareness that, like other creatures in nature, man lives and dies according to the same immutable laws. It is at least true that many modern-day fishery managers concern themselves about the sorts of issues Grimble supposed might be true: that a salmon's sense of smell, or a salmon's reluctance to rise to the fly might be genetically determined:
it has been continually noticed that prawns which have been cooked the day before being used often fail in the hands of the crack bait-fishers; while others coming behind them, though not so skilful, but using prawns boiled that morning, take fish after fish—a strong proof that the Galway fish, like their relations of the Shannon, have their senses of taste and smell more fully developed than the fish of the Scotch rivers, which are cajoled by prawns that have been bottled in glycerine for two or three years, and which as the cork is removed give off such an ancient and fish-like smell as to make the handling of them anything but a pleasure. 35

Soon after the fish passes were made [Ireland's first ever fish passes were constructed on the Ballysadare River in 1840, and resulted in a sudden and remarkable improvement in the river's catch record.] the angling became very good, and then by degrees the fish became indisposed to rise, though there were plenty of them. It is possible that this undesirable state of affairs may have been brought about by crossing the native fish with those of the Weser, in Germany. 36

In Volume II of *Salmon Rivers in Ireland*—a continuation of Volume I—Grimble deplores the fact that "spurge-killed" fish are sold on the open market. Today, such acts would cause a public outcry simply because it is now generally known that the eating of poisoned fish can be a very risky business indeed. Grimble's concern suggests how angling authors' awarenesses often predate those of the general public by a considerable margin.

Grimble's *Salmon and Trout Rivers of England and Wales* is a companion to the volumes discussed above. The same general issues are raised; the same general observations are made. Canadian readers might be made slightly proud by Grimble's mention of a large salmon taken from Campbell River. According to the author, a Mr. William Tayleur caught eleven Wye River Salmon—from ten to twenty-eight pounds—during the first half of April, and that the
last-caught fish, a ten-pounder, was seen as "somewhat of a con-
trast to one of 68 lbs. taken by him [Tayleur] on the 3rd September,
1899, from the Campbell River of British Columbia."37

On a less happy note, the same volume contains what today
would be termed a damming indictment of man's greed and folly.
And it once again illustrates that contemporary man's concern
for his environment is at least a half-century late. That Grimble's
concerns are clearly not new to angling authors of his period, or
that angling authors have long been concerned about man's abuse of
nature needs not proving to those familiar with the mainstream of
the Izaak Walton tradition:

In 1850—there were plenty of salmon and sea trout in
the Twymyn; in 1860 there were none, for the stream
ran from weekend to week-end the color of milk, while
so virulent was the pollution that cattle and
horses were poisoned to death by eating the herbage
that had been covered by the lead water....38

With regard to the pollution, the late Mr. Ffennell,
the then Fishery Inspector, made the following very-much-
to-the-point remarks: -- Said he, "A miner will go any
distance for the water required to work his machinery
and clean his ore; no length of hill or moor will
stop him if he can get the necessary fall, and if a
land cut will not do he will ingeniously throw
wooden aqueducts across the obstructive valleys;
but ask the same men to allow the fish to live in
the rivers below them, the poultry to pick up the
sand without being killed, the cattle to drink the
water or eat the herbage without fear of 'belan,' and
you will find that the expense of digging a few
catch pits and of clearing the refuse there by
means of a ditch, or, may be, of a few fathoms of
wooden open pipe, would absorb* the whole profits of
a mine which, like the Dylifa, employs three hundred
hands and raises some two hundred tons of ore a month!"39
Footnotes


4. Ibid., p. 27-28.

5. Biographer of Shelly, and author of *Conversations of Lord Byron*.


7. Ibid., 16.

8. Ibid., 37.

9. Ibid., 136.

10. Ibid., 181.


12. Ibid., p. 89.

13. Ibid., p. 18.


16. Ibid., 140.

17. Ibid., II, 275.
18. Ibid., 239.
19. Ibid., 373.
21. Ibid., p. 284.
22. Ibid., pp. 273-74.
23. Ibid., pp. 275-76.
24. Ibid., pp. 278-79.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., p. 3.
28. Ibid., p. 6.
29. Ibid., p. 42.
30. Ibid.
34. Ibid., 21.
35. Ibid., 22-23.
36. Ibid., 104.

Ibid., 261.

Ibid., 262-63.
"The Handbooks"

Although there is an admitted similarity in the content of the books of this and the preceding chapter, there is also sufficient reason for separating the twenty-three works into two groups. As the chapter heading suggests, the ten books considered here clearly focus on the business of providing useful information. There are few digressions into non-fishing matters, and there are few anecdotes that do not relate directly to fishing.

It remains, however, to explain why the works of Boosey and Grimble have been relegated to the previous chapter. There is certainly no denying that both of them focus on fishing matters. Yet, when compared to works of this chapter, it is equally clear that neither fulfills the role of handbook writer. Boosey is simply too encylopedic; his short-item approach gives his work a piecemeal quality. Grimble is the opposite; his desire to impart helpful fishing hints is submerged by discussions on statistics and economics.

An explanation as to why handbooks on angling merit serious study might also be timely. It would certainly be fool-hardy to suggest that the works of this chapter would excite the interest of academic critics. Nevertheless, the works do illustrate both the impact of Izaak Walton and the long-standing
respect for the art of angling. To the angler-reader, at least, the handbook can provide both pleasure and enlightenment—virtues often claimed as justification for reading works of the more recognized genres.

In addition to having an avowed utilitarian purpose, handbook writers, as a group, share a respect for earlier writers' ideas and attitudes. (It might be noted that the works of this chapter, like those of the preceding chapter, primarily belong to the first half of the nineteenth century.) It is hoped that this chapter will show that handbook writers are concerned with much more than merely the profit motive of angling, or the physical pleasures that angling provides.

The earliest handbook considered here, T.F. Salter's *The Angler's Guide*, illustrates the point. *The Angler's Guide* can only be described as a very thorough text-book. The fact that its eighth publication occurred within twenty years of the first printing—in 1814—attests to its popularity. Much of the work's literary merit comes from the writers Salter quotes. In quoting from the first canto of *Rural Sports*, Salter says that "[John] Gay has given the Fisherman some wholesome advice... in the following beautiful lines...."¹ Similarly, when Salter acknowledges James Thomson, Moses Browne or Izaak Walton, he seems to do so more out of a desire to provide fishing information than out of a desire to provide reading pleasure. It is probably safe to say that Salter viewed facts as the foundation upon which the art of angling was constructed. Certainly his motive in writing is clear:
my pen has always been guided by a love of truth, and a sincere desire to improve an Art in which I so much delight;--and the publication of it proceeds wholly from a conviction that a plain practical Guide to the Art of Angling was wanted....

It is not surprising that an author who respects both the art of angling and truth should also respect ethics. And although Salter does not demean other forms of fishing, it is clear that he, like so many other writers of angling, credits fly-fishing as the highest form of the gentle art. Even when giving instruction about lesser forms of angling, Salter's philosophy is ever-present:

I have presumed to offer my opinions and instructions, as a guide to those who may be desirous of learning how to take Jack and Pike in a fair, pleasing, and sportsman-like manner....

Significantly, Salter not only believes that fly-fishing is the most praiseworthy method of taking fish, but that to fly-fish as recommended by Walton's friend and disciple Charles Cotton--fish fine and far off--is the "he plus ultra of fly-fishing."

Like Salter's Guide, George Agar Hansard's Trout and Salmon Fishing in Wales, a handbook published in 1834, includes a number of poetic asides, and illustrates an obvious respect for the art of angling. As the title suggests, Hansard focuses on where to fish in Wales, and how to catch the game fish of Wales--the salmon, trout, grayling, and carp.

Although Hansard acknowledges some of his sources, he does not acknowledge all. He does not say, for example, that Thomson penned the following description, or that the passage is
taken from the poem *Spring*:

--should you lure
From his dark haunt, beneath the tangled roots
Of pendant trees, the monarch of the brook,
Behooves you then to ply your finest art.
Long time he following, cautious scans the fly,
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft
The dimpled water checks his jealous fear:
At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun
Passes a cloud: he desperate takes the death
With Sullen plunge; at once he darts along,
Deep struck, and runs out all the lengthen'd line,
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,
The cavern'd bank, his old secure abode;
And flies aloft and flounces round the pool,
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand
That feels him still, yet to his furious course
Gives way, you, now retiring, following now,
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage;
Till floating hard upon his breathless side,
And to his fate abandoned, to the shore
You gaily drag your unresisting prize.⁵

In addition to the handbook information and the poetic asides, Hansard discusses fish species, how spear-fishing is conducted in remote Canada, and Welsh idioms that might prove helpful to the travelling angler. (His Welsh-English dictionary of common phrases teaches, for example, that a *pysg* or *pysgod* is a fish.)⁶ Despite possessing a wide-ranging interest, Hansard is not inattentive to detail. He provides a lengthy list of insects, and discusses how to dress artificial flies which will suitably imitate the naturals.

On several occasions, Hansard takes time to moralize. In a passage describing the successful tempting of a "monarch of the brook," he anthropomorphizes to show how power corrupts. Doubtless many readers will be happy to discover that the tyrant pays for his crime:
I have been often agreeably amused, sitting behind a bush that has hung over the water two yards or more, to observe the trouts taking their rounds, and patrolling in order, according to their quality. Sometimes I have seen three or four private men coming up together under the shade; and presently an officer, or a man of quality, of double size, approaches from his country seat under a bank or great stone, and rushes among them, as furiously as I once saw a young justice of the peace do upon three poor anglers. As I cannot approve of such proceedings, I have, with some extraordinary pleasure, revenged the weaker upon the stronger, by dropping my bait half a yard before him. With what an air of authority have I seen the qualified—what shall I call him?—extend his jaws, and take in the delicious morsel, and then marching slowly off in quest of more, till stopped by a smart stroke which I had given him; though there is no occasion to do so in this way of fishing; for the great ones always hook themselves."

It would be difficult for an angler-reader not to become quickly hooked on Alfred Ronalds' The Fly-Fisher's Entomology. With W.C. Stewart's The Practical Angler, it shares the highest possible ranking for nineteenth century handbooks on angling. And most of Ronalds' advice is as valid today as when it was first published in 1836.

Although the work contains considerable general information about fish and fishing, Ronalds' title suggests the focus. The first three chapters deal with fly-tying, feather-dying, gut-staining, and how to fish for and play trout and grayling. Chapter IV, "An Illustrated List of Insects," is fully half the book's length. It is also clearly the work of a dedicated angler and entomologist, and the many plates of both the natural insects and their imitations are truly eye-arresting.
The Fly-Fisher's Entomology ran through eleven editions in eighty-four years, and was still a standard work when republished under the editorship of H.T. Sheringham (fishing editor of the Field) in 1921. Like many others, Sheringham viewed Ronalds' work as one of the all-time great contributions to the pool of angling literature: although "concepts and interpretations have altered and are altering...the essential value [of Ronalds' work] is unlikely to be bettered." 

It is probably safe to say that much of Ronalds' value—as indeed that of other angler-writers—stems from the fact that he paid close attention to the details of nature. He was not quick to accept the theories of "quacks and bunglers" who invented or espoused theories "to hide their want of skill or spare their pains...." 

Certainly Ronalds did not spare himself pains. For example, he built a fish-watching observatory in order to gather the information he would otherwise only have been able to guess at. In addition to learning how very easily trout hold their positions in river currents, he also learned that trout are very competitive in their search for food. Like so many observations made by early angling authors (such as that above by Hansard), Ronalds' findings predate The Territorial Imperative by a considerable margin:

The stationary position in which the Trout is enabled to maintain himself in the most rapid stream, poised like a hawk in the air, was the first thing which struck us, in our observations. Even
the tail, which is known to be the principal organ of propulsion, could scarcely be observed to move, and the fins, which are to balance him, seemed quite useless, excepting when he saw an insect; then he would dart with the greatest velocity through the opposing current at his prey, and as quickly return. The station which he occupies in this manner is invariably well chosen. Should a favorite haunt where food is concentrated by the current be rather crowded by his fellows, he will prefer contending with them for a share of it, to residing long in an unproductive locality.10

Ronalds also considered matters relating to the fish's sense of hearing and smell with equal care. He quotes and agrees with Sir Humphrey Davy's "sound reasoning"11 that the principal use of the nostrils in fishes...is to assist in the propulsion of water through the gills for performing the office of respiration; but...there are some nerves in these organs which give fishes a sense of the qualities of water, or of substances dissolved in or diffused through it, similar to our sense of smell, or perhaps rather our sense of taste, for their can be no doubt that fishes are attracted by scented worms which are sometimes used by anglers that employ ground baits....it seems probable that as the quality of water is connected with their life and health, they must be exquisitely sensible to changes in water, and must have similar relations to it, to those which an animal with the most delicate nasal organs has to the air.12

There can be little doubt that had earlier societies observed their environment with as much care and concern as did Ronalds, it would be unlikely that the world's air, water, and soil would be as threatened as they are today. Ecological matters aside, what Ronalds observed as necessary for the complete angler applies equally well to any who seriously desire to be complete men: "it requires ingenuity and perserverance, observation and judgment, aye, travel too, and experience, to make an angler."13
It would appear that John Younger was one such complete angler and man. Younger's small but charming handbook *Oil River Angling for Salmon and Trout* was first published in 1839. A eulogy from the *Scotsman*, quoted in the prefatory "Note to the Reader," says that Younger was

"one of the most remarkable men of the south of Scotland; whether as a genial writer of prose or verse, or a man of high conversational powers, and clear common sense, the shoemaker of St. Boswells has few or no rivals in the south—in his death leaving behind him no enemies, and the memory of a guileless, unblameable, honest life."

Younger's "clear common sense" is evident from first to last. He deplored long-winded treatises on angling, and, except for a few pardonable exceptions, he stuck to his last. His intention was to give only useful directions, divested of all the unnecessary discussions and superfluity of frivolous anecdote, which have hitherto tended to swell the bulk of treatises on this subject.

In one of his rare tangents, Younger takes to task the disclaimers of the angling art. He wonders whether they were not either overly sensitive or downright hypocritical:

I believe, these sensitive gentlemen, the poets could all eat lamb, veal, and oysters, as heartily as trouts can snap up lovely innocent flies, or gobble the small fry of their own species with all the mischievous appetite of a cannibal. And, alas! the sensibilities of genius give no sufficient guarantee for that consistency of character which would justify us in bestowing the designation of "a good man," on any human being.

Younger's main concern is for the art of fly-fishing, and many of his basic theories—like that on choosing the correct salmon fly—are still very much in vogue:
What I advise relates more properly to the general combinations of the colours, shape and size of the fly, as suited to the state of the water, than to the particular materials by which such a combination may be best effected.

The experienced river angler also knows there is wisdom in Younger's recommendation that, when rivers are low and clear, the size of the fly should be reduced—if necessary, right down to trout-sized patterns. Whether Younger is speaking of theoretically or practically, his style is always compact, crisp, and thorough:

But I believe that in fishing, as in other things, example is more instructive than precept, and, therefore, a beginner would do well to set himself to observe with attention an experienced fisher begin and go over a stream or cast: his easy position of body, method of casting, and manner of leading his line; and above all, should he hook a fish, the way he manages him, until he is laid "broad upon his breathless side" a rich and beauteous prize. For instance, he will not drag his fly across the stream, neither pull it against the current, which is a common error with beginners, and quite absurd. But in salmon fishing, he will, in throwing his line, direct it full out, to make the fly alight on the spot desired—not straight across the current, but slanting a little downwards, so that it may form as gentle a curve as possible; he will move it as slowly as the current will permit, over the spot where he expects the fish to be lying; he will make no perceptible motion to keep his fly on the surface, (except on a sluggish pool;) but let it sink a little, depending on feeling rather than on sight, and though apparently keeping no pull on his line, yet all the while able to detect the touch of a minnow.

Although the sense of touch will always be important to the angler, it is most important to the wet-fly fisherman. In dry-fly fishing, the angler has an additional sense upon which to rely—sight. Younger wrote about wet-fly fishing. Basically, dry-fly fishing was to remain an almost unknown art; for many years to come. Almost, because G.P.R. Pulman, the first to write
of the new possibility, did so in his *Vade-Mecum of Fly-Fishing for Trout*, published in 1841, only one year after the publication of Younger's *On River Angling*.

Although the *Vade-Mecum* enjoyed two later editions, it seems to have been little read.²⁸ The purpose, here, is not to explore Pulman's role in the development of dry-fly fishing, or to deplore the fact that Pulman had but slight impact on his angling contemporaries, but to illustrate that his work is a worthy—if little-read—contribution to the literature of angling.

Certainly Pulman's value is not dependent on his being the first to write about dry-fly fishing. Even a cursory glance through the *Vade-Mecum* shows that its intention and execution clearly entitle it to a place among the worthy handbooks of the nineteenth century. What is more, it is also evident that Pulman recognized that he was not writing anything that resembled poetry. He also knew that in writing about fly-fishing, he was writing about the "most interesting and scientific branch of the [angling] art," and that his was a utilitarian purpose:

> Our aim and object is to produce a *useful* work—to furnish, not amusement but information; and this we shall endeavour to do in the best and clearest manner we are able.²⁹

Like Ronalds, Pulman bases his advice on personal experience or observation, and, like Ronalds, Pulman had a more than passing interest in entomological matters. In discussing caddis larvae, Pulman is simultaneously scientific and imagistic:
When seen at the bottom of the water these cases [caddis cases] appear like short bits of stick, but they will be found, on examination, to be regularly and beautifully constructed of various materials—some of minute portions of the leaves and other parts of aquatic plants; others of pieces of reed, grass, and the like; and many of fine gravel, sand, and even little shell fish.20

No matter if he is giving hints on tackle, fishing methods, fishing seasons, fish behavior, or insects, Pulman's respect for the art of angling and for angling authorities is equally clear. (He frequently refers to, or draws from, Dame Juliana Berners, Izaak Walton, Sir Humphry Davy, Ronalds, Thomas Tod Stoddart, Professor Wilson, and Edward Fitzgibbon.) In his concluding praise of the angler and angling, Pulman says of anglers that they are "a more gifted and higher order of men than others...," and that he hopes his advice may help his pupil reader:

May they afford thee profit—may they help to initiate thee, imperfect though they are, into the guileless mysteries of the "gentle craft"—to lead thee into the green fields, where, by the babbling brook, thou mightest commune with nature and thine own heart—where thou mightest forget for a while the cares and anxieties of life, and return again to thy daily duties, thy body strengthened, thy mind refreshed, thy thoughts elevated, thy desires purified, thy soul more keenly attuned to the wants and sympathies of thy fellow men, and more impressed with the goodness and power of the Creator of all things.21

Like so many other handbooks on angling, Edward Chitty's The Illustrated Fly-Fisher's Text-Book, published in 1845, is more than merely a pleasant-to-read and moderately-thorough work. It is clear evidence that some of the nineteenth century's angling information and angling philosophy--with minor adjustments--is
admirably suited to the late twentieth century.

Like so many others—including Walton and the famous fish-cook Thomas Barker—Chitty also respects fish as table-fare, and toward this end, presents the reader with how-to-cook-it advice. Like Boosey, Chitty was obviously well versed in angling literature, and when he differed with others, he did so in a relatively gentle and witty fashion:

I shall now canvass some of the doctrines of authors who have profess to teach "the young idea how to fish," which I think questionable, and which appear calculated to mislead, if they be not decidedly erroneous..."The beginner should commence learning to cast the fly, having the wind on his back." This, I must tell you depends on the force of the wind. If it be great, it is then easy enough to cast the fly forward,—but one is never more likely to whip off flies; because its force prevents the line becoming fully extended behind; nor will it alight softly, unless he contrive to let it blow full out, and then, by lowering the point of the rod, allow the fly to fall of its own weight; which requires some experience. To a beginner my advice is, to throw rather across the wind, than directly with it, whereby he is more likely to avoid both these misadventures... And Mr. Ronald's, in his Fly-Fisher's Entomology, is only correct in recommending practice "ashore," when the object is to achieve throwing among trees, an art quite distinct from throwing on the water...22

Chitty's indebtedness to Walton is evident in both the form and content of The Illustrated Fly-Fisher. Chitty's first three chapters provide straight-forward advice on fishing and fishing equipment—lines, reels, rods, etc. Ironically, the contemporary validity of Chitty's warnings about reels emphasizes how little reel manufacturers or anglers (or both) have learned in one and one-quarter centuries:
Reels require very good and delicate workmanship, great strength, and little weight of metal; all the parts should be closely fitted to each other, and, in particular, the inner revolving plate should be well applied upon the exterior fixed one. They should run freely, otherwise you cannot wind up steadily; and the larger the diameter of the circular plates, and the narrower in proportion the pillars or bars between them, the greater will be the length of line taken up at each turn of the handle.23

From chapter four onward, Chitty presents his material in dialogue form. Though not so immediately engaging as Walton's dialogue, often enough it is metaphorically rich. In pointing out to his pupil, Herbert, the need for practice and industry, the teacher, Theophilus, says:

Practice, my worthy disciple, practice, and you will, in proportion to your industry, sooner or later be able to answer "Anche io son pescatore." Be not disheartened at the sight of the mountain in your path. Ascend it but half-way, and the prospect over what is passed will recompense all your former vexatious failures.

Hope is the angler's staff:--walk hence with that, And manage it against despairing thoughts.24

In keeping with the utilitarian purpose of handbooks, Chitty quotes a practical reason for the angler "studying to be quiet." And, in keeping with the handbook writers' respect for accuracy, Chitty bases his advice on an experiment he conducted. To determine how sensitive fish are to the angler's presence, Chitty kicked "upon a soft clayey soil" while observing some resting salmon. He repeated his experiment several times, and because the fish "suddenly darted off" each time, he concluded that, even if fish cannot hear, they can feel "every footstep which falls near them," and that the angler is therefore wise to
"glide along as quietly as possible...."^{24}

On a more philosophic plane, Chitty urges the preservation of both spawning fish and fry, and says that the responsibility for preserving salmon rivers should rightly be borne by the entire community through which the river runs. Present day sociologists might see that Chitty is not altogether wrong in suggesting that by spending money to maintain angling (and, perhaps, other sports), man's disposition is improved, and his criminality is reduced.\textsuperscript{25} To a significant degree, Chitty is still right when he suggests that anglers are "the only body of men" interested in protecting a river's upper reaches from the many deleterious practices which plague them.\textsuperscript{26} The dangers, as today, were varied in 1845--greed, pollution, poaching being foremost:

Then come the artificial injuries inanimate, such as mill races, heads, and leads, and eel baskets, in all of which the fry is destroyed by sackfuls on their journey to sea! and the foulness of water caused by manufactories, drives them from a river if it do:^[sic] not destroy them; their great human enemies are poachers, who make profit of the roe for bait....\textsuperscript{27}

In addition to Chitty's being within both the Walton and handbook traditions—if the two can indeed be separated—it remains to show how he also shares a common ground with the muscular writers—Colquhoun, Kingsley, and Wilson. Although Chitty is far less muscular, he does have a high regard for pure excitement. To Chitty, the tingle of triumph is a singularly significant sensation:

Herb.—What a splendid fish! but how you tremble. Well done!
Theoph.—Tremble!! Do you fight a salmon, even of this size, and you will find yourself
"another." Talk of excitement, catching a salmon is the [acme] of it!^8

The two Edward Fitzgibbon contributions considered here—A Handbook of Angling and Book of the Salmon—were published three years apart, in 1847 and 1850 respectively. In keeping with the handbook tradition, A Handbook deals with both practical and philosophic matters. The fishing hints need not be enumerated. In terms of the Walton tradition, it is more instructive to pin-point several of Fitzgibbon's attitudes relating to the ethics and philosophy of angling.

In brief, Fitzgibbon views roe as a poaching bait, fly-fishing as the highest form of the angling art, angling as a favorite pastime of great people, and the triumph of art over brute force as being the true marvel of angling. Fitzgibbon was well aware that, though hard work is required to become a Master angler, the master angler is characterized by a deceiving "ease, elegance, and efficiency."^9 Like Colquhoun, Fitzgibbon is not shy about his personal prejudices. He returns Colquhoun's attack on English poachers with an attack on Scottish anglers, who he deemed very inferior to their English cousins. But, friendly Fitzgibbon kindly assures the Scottish that "if they follow [his] instructions, they have nothing to fear."^10

Book of the Salmon, though important from the traditional viewpoint, is also important for advancing the cause of modern fish culture. Whereas many earlier writers had touched on the subject of fish culture—as indeed had Walton—it remained for specialists to make the major breakthroughs. Compared to
Ronald's and Pulman's contributions to entomology, Fitzgibbon's contributions to biology seem rather pale. Nevertheless, it is true that his "Part the Second: The Natural History of Salmon" is significant. Unlike Ronalds and Pulman, Fitzgibbon did not speak from first-hand knowledge. He claimed only to be the writer, and credited Mr. Andrew Young of Invershin (manager of the Duke of Sutherland's northern salmon rivers) as "the real author—the communicator of the chief facts enumerated...."  

The modern reader might be surprised at some of the facts enumerated in Book of the Salmon. That salmon travel faster in warm water than they do in cold is now well accepted. That Fitzgibbon reported that fact in 1850 is no less surprising than his outlining what now are termed "spawning channels," and his warning that the first thing to be taken care of in this way of breeding salmon is that the spawning-beds which are to be artificially formed, be supplied if possible with the water from which the ova are taken. In making experiments on the growth of salmon-fry this precaution is more absolutely necessary than when one is breeding for the sole sake of stocking a river. In all cases it will be advisable that the spawning and rearing-ponds be not fed with water of a temperature widely differing from that from which the spawn has been procured.  

All is not sweetness and light, however. Among the errors Fitzgibbon makes are his claim that salmon fry and parr are different species, and that it is "fresh water, no matter how pure its source [which renders] dark the bright, silvery scales of fish fresh from the sea...."  

Readers who incline more toward ethics and philosophy than toward science might be surprised that the modern-day practice of intentionally foul-hooking fish is not so modern after
all. Fitzgibbon deplored it in 1850; he called it "stoke-hauling." Fitzgibbon also debunks—as "merely laughable"—the myth that salmon take their tails into their mouths preparatory to making high leaps. If Book of the Salmon needs any debunking, let it be on the grounds that among the authorities Fitzgibbon prefers to quote most frequently is the author of A Handbook of Angling.

The Practical Angler is already so thoroughly respected that a detailing of W.C. Stewart's role as handbook writer would be redundant. As with Book of the Salmon, it might be more timely to enquire into philosophic postulates of the work. Because The Practical Angler (first published in 1857) made its appearance only seven years after Book of the Salmon, it seems quite natural that W.C. Stewart should make at least a passing contribution to the new science of fish-culture. And he did, by pointing out that waters can support only a certain weight of trout—either many and small, or few and large—that under natural conditions fish numbers are mainly dependent on spawning conditions, that drainage and flooding seriously injure both fish spawn and fish food, and that pollution from "manufactories, bleachfields, etc. [which] send their dyes and other deleterious refuse straight into the streams" causes serious havoc.

It is unlikely that Stewart would be surprised to learn that much of what he pointed out has yet to be realized by the angling public. His awareness of the masses, hinted by his using a review of his own work that appeared in Blackwood's
Magazine, suggests as much:

"That darkness rather than light is the deliberate choice of the million. The best teaching in the world is thrown away upon stupidity and self-conceit, and that not only in ethics, but in such practical matters as angling."40

That Stewart suffered no serious illusions about his reading public is further illustrated by the care with which he made his prefatory remarks. Not only does he spell out that he passes on only "tested" information, that he consulted both "the best professional anglers of the day" and many books on the subject, that the sole purpose of his work is to convey information, but also that he has taken pains not to be misunderstood: "[I] have endeavored to make [the information] as distinct as possible...."41

Despite all this, many will misunderstand Stewart. Some have already concluded that Stewart measured angling only in pounds and ounces, and, by focusing on a few passages, it is easy to see how such a conclusion can be reached:

We cannot see the justice of an opinion that concludes the capture of a certain number of trout sport, and of twice that number—taken by the same means—Butchery. If the sport of angling lies in the capture of fish, it seems evident that the more fish the better sport; and it is our intention to treat of the different branches of angling solely with the view of showing how the greatest weight of trout can be captured in a given time.42

And, then again: "Our duty is to point out how most trout can be captured in a given time...."43 how most trout can be captured in a given time...."
To judge Stewart strictly on these quotations is perilous. For example, the latter quotation is the conclusion to a comparison of the merits of upstream and downstream fly-fishing—not a blanket recommendation for killing creelfuls of trout. It is important to remember that Stewart's comments are related to fly-fishing. Had he been solely concerned with big catches, he would never even have discussed fly-fishing. After all, he was fully aware that bait fishing was far more effective. To best understand Stewart's position, other statements must be considered. For example, "it is unsportsman-like in the highest degree to kill fish that are of no use," and "Fish or no fish, whenever opportunity offers, the angler may be found at the water-side."

In the following passage, Stewart not only opposes both the use of the most effective of all baits and the killing of ripe fish, but demonstrates a breadth of philosophical outlook that belies the big-catch suggestion:

We have treated at considerable length of the four principal methods usually employed for capturing trout. The reader may perhaps be disappointed that salmon-roe fishing has not been added as a fifth; but our reason for keeping it out is, that we do not consider it a justifiable method of angling, the high price the roe brings affording great, indeed the principal, encouragement to the wholesale destruction of breeding salmon which goes on in Tweed and its tributaries during close time. We think that in the first Act introduced upon the subject of the salmon-fisheries, there should be a clause inserted rendering it illegal for any one to fish with salmon-roe, or to be found with it in his possession. Doing away with this traffic would do more to protect the Tweed than all the water-bailiffs between Tweedsmuir
and Berwick. There are certainly a few salmon taken shortly before the fishing close, with roe sufficiently matured for curing; but the roe, legally obtained in this way, is not a hundredth part of that taken illegally during the close time. Moreover, the fact of salmon being caught in this state in the open season proves that the rivers are open too long, and that the law should be altered in this respect also.\textsuperscript{46}

The alert reader will have seen that the parenthetical aside in Stewart's comment on sport and butchery—"taken by the same means"—and the "if" are particularly important. If the alert reader is also an experienced angler, he will know why Stewart would rate fly-fishing over bait-fishing (bait-fishing is the easier, and "there is more merit...in excelling in what is difficult..."\textsuperscript{47}), and why Stewart would avoid deciding the gradation of merit for the various fishing techniques (for one thing, a technique which proves difficult one day might well prove easy the next).

It is not surprising that Stewart would avoid becoming embroiled in such tedious matters. For the same reason, he would avoid trying to specify the number of fish which separated the catch of sport from the catch of butchery. Fleshed out, his case would stand thusly: if the sport in angling rests only on the catching of fish, then the more fish caught, the better is the sport; if the sport in angling rests partly in the catching of fishing and partly in the method used to catch them, then only by comparing catches taken by identical methods can the sport be measured; if...where...; if...when...; if...weather...; if...
the sport in angling rests only in the not catching of fish, then the fewer fish caught, the better is the sport; but if the sport in angling does not rest on the number of fish caught, all talk of numbers is meaningless. Stewart left his reader to decide how to fish and how many fish to take; his intentions seem to have been merely to teach the most efficient ways to capture trout, and the need to be chary of definitions.

Charles Henry Cook's *The Book of the All-Round Angler* made its first appearance in 1888, nearly a quarter century after *The Practical Angler*. It is important for the traditional reasons, and because it advanced the cause of the ecologically-interested. Once again, it should be unnecessary to dwell on the practical matters dealt with, or on Cook's basic motives. The "Publisher's Note to the Fifth Edition" hints at the thoroughness of the work—in thirty-four years, it "enjoyed the remarkable circulation of over 150,000 copies..., and [was undoubtedly one of] the most widely read work[s] on angling in the world"., and Cook's prefatory statement of purpose fits squarely into the handbook tradition:

My ideal text-book on angling...is a work which omits no necessary information, contains no technical terms without an explanation of them, and enables a person who is entirely ignorant of the subject to understand it....

That Cook recommends grayling fishing largely because it stretches out the fly-fishing season, is additional evidence of his high regard for the joys of the angling art's highest form:
Fly-fishing is deservedly popular, and the reasons are not far to seek. This branch of our sport affords us active exercise amidst the most beautiful scenery our islands can boast—sometimes pastoral and peaceful, at others wild and majestic. The fish caught are the most game and sportive of any found in the United Kingdom, and their capture often involves much skill, combined with a knowledge of insect life and natural history. No noisome baits or ground baits are required, and the fish, when cooked, provide us with agreeable food.

That Cook discusses matters relating to fish-culture and pollution indicates a growing—or at least continued—interest in both those subjects. His rather unique belief that the "cunning of fish" was increasing rapidly is not unworthy of consideration. Cook's angling companion William Senior (Red Spinner), himself a highly respected authority on fish and fishing, says this on the subject:

You will sometimes meet men who laugh to scorn the notion that fish are becoming educated. Education may not, perhaps, be precisely the word to use in such a case, but we are bound to face the fact that every year fish not only seem to be, but really are, harder to catch.

Whether fishing makes fish more wary is still much debated. So is the question of whether adult salmon feed in fresh water. Cook's statements regarding the salmon-feeding question are as sounds as ever—though it is now suspected that a chemical change in the pituitary gland is a signal causative factor behind the change from the salt- to the fresh-water behavior:

It is rare to find food in salmon caught either in fresh or salt water, and a long and careful scientific examination of the fish led to the conclusion that salmon while in fresh water suffered from an atrophy of the digestive organs which rendered them incapable of assimilating food. It was afterwards found, however,
that certain post-mortem changes had misled the observers, who had not examined fish sufficiently freshly caught for their purpose. In view of the facts, that salmon in spring often prefer a gudgeon to a gaudy fly, take like-bait in such rivers as the Hampshire Avon, swallow huge lumps of worms in flood time, and even rise like trout to March browns and may be caught on the dry fly, it is hardly arguable that they do not feed in rivers. That they feed but little seems fairly certain.54

Because man values fish, and because fish stocks were declining, it is natural that means of assisting nature would be sought. The previously-mentioned spawning channel is one such means. To clarify his spawning-channel theories, Cook employed diagrams--including a cross-section. And to indicate how serious were some of the principal reasons for the decline in fish stocks, he charged the government with "criminal neglect" for not dealing "drastically with pollutions, and stupid over-netting."55
Footnotes


2 Ibid., p. iii.

3 Ibid., p. v (my italics).

4 Ibid., p. 271.


6 Ibid., p. 227.

7 Ibid., pp. 78-79.


9 Ronads, Entomology, p. 17.

10 Ibid., pp. 8-9.

11 Which appears on pages 28 and 184 of the 5th ed. of Salmonia, discussed below.

12 Ronalds, Entomology, pp. 18-19.

13 Ibid., p. 65.


15 Ibid., p. 75 (Younger's italics).

16 Ibid., p. 25.
17 Ibid., pp. 56-57 (Younger's italics).

18 See Seringham's "Introduction" to Ronalds' *Entomology*, p. xiv.


20 Ibid., p. 25.

21 Ibid., pp. 103-104.


23 Ibid., p. 15.

24 Ibid., p. 151 (Chitty's italics).

25 Ibid., p. 208.

26 Ibid., p. 206.

27 Ibid., pp. 202-203.

28 Ibid., pp. 166-167.


30 Ibid., p. 135.


32 Ibid., p. 218.

33 Ibid., pp. 230-231.

34 Ibid., pp. 162-163.

35 Ibid., p. 201.
36 Ibid., p. 144.


39 Ibid., p. 25.

40 Ibid., p. x.

41 Ibid., p. viii.

42 Ibid., p. 11.

43 Ibid., p. 74.

44 Ibid., p. 23.

45 Ibid., p. 3.


47 Ibid., p. 4.


49 Ibid., p. vi.

50 Ibid., p. 50.

51 Ibid., p. 3.

52 Ibid., p. vi.
"The Sketches and Songs"

It is freely admitted that this is an inadequate chapter. To deal with the nineteenth century's angling sketches and angling songs in one chapter is to deal inadequately with both. Both deserve detailed investigations, but detailed investigations into either area are simply beyond the scope of this study. What has been attempted here is relatively straightforward.

"Sketches" has been used to define non-book-length, forays into the subject of angling. None of the three sketch writers considered here was deeply involved in writing about angling, though two of them were clearly serious writers. Those two—John Wilson (Christopher North) and Charles Kingsley—have contributed sketches which have earned the respect of serious authors of angling works. The third sketch-writer—Edward Barnard—failed in an attempt to publish his 1833 manuscript, "Angling Memories and Maxims." The work, published three-quarters of a century later in the Chronicles of the Houghton Fishing Club, is likely representative of a great many sketches which, though never published would shed light on the century's attitudes toward the gentle art. The work of Wilson and Kingsley is likely representative of many articles or essays which, though published in periodicals or as
chapters in book-length works, would require considerable research to uncover.

The "songs," or verses, considered here, come from the pens of writers who were either not directly in the mainstream of angling literature, or whose verse works are best considered separately from their prose contributions. Once again, no attempt has been made to uncover poems published separately, or in periodicals.

John Wilson's angling sketches appear in two basic forms: dialogue conversation and essay commentary. His conversational passages, contained in contributions to *Blackwood's Magazine* between 1822 and 1835, are of little merit simply because they are an inconsistent body of material. More than fifty percent of the seventy "Noctes" published by the magazine—and which were later gathered together and published in *Noctes Ambrosianae*—have been directly credited to Wilson, but within that mass of material, Wilson only deals with angling matters on a few occasions. The conversational sketches of the *Noctes* are more diverting than they are instructional. Much of the *Noctes*' reading pleasure comes from a combination of easy-flowing conversation and dry wit. The point can be illustrated in a passage in which discussion of a medal for Tweed-caught salmon sparks an entertainingly imaginative, and obviously embellished, explanation of a victory over a monarch of the river:

North. By the by, James [James Hogg], who won the salmon medal this season on the Tweed?

Shepherd [Hogg]. Waa, think ye, could it be, you coof, but masel!? I beat them a' by twa stane
wecht. Oh, Mr. North, but it wou'd hae done your heart gude to hae daunter'd alang the banks wi' me on the 25th, and seen the slaughter. At the third throw the snoot o' a famous fish sookit in ma flee—and for some seconds keepit steadfast in a sort o' eddy that gaed sullenly swirlin' at the tail o' yon pool—I needna name't—for the river had risen just to the proper pint, and was black as ink, accept when noo and then the sun struggled out frae atween the clud-chinks, and then the water was purple as heather-moss, in the season o' blaeberryes. But that verra instant the flee begun to bit him on the tongue, for by a jerk o' the wrist I had strictly gi'en him the butt—and sunbeam never swifter shot frae heaven, than shot that saumon-beam doon intil and oot o' the pool below, and alang the sauch shallows or you come to Juniper Bank. Clap—clap—clap—at the same instant played a couple o' cushats frae an aik aboon my head, at the purr o' the pirn, that let oot, in a twinklin' a hunner yards o' Mr. Phin's best, strang aneuch to haud a bill or a rhinoceros.

North. Incomparable tackle!

Shepherd. Far, far awa' doon the flood, see till him, sir—see till him loup—loup—loupin' intil the air, describin' in the spray the rinnin' rainbows! Scarcely cou'd I believe, at sic a distance, that he was the same fish.... But we were linked thegither, sir, but the inveesible gut o' destiny—and I chasteesed him in his pastime wi' the rod o' affliction.... Snuvin up the stream he goes, hither and thither, but still keepin' weel in the middle—and noo strecht and steddy as a bridegroom ridin' to the kirk.

North. An original image.

For the Noctes as for the Recreations of Christopher North, Wilson adopted the psuedonym Christopher North. The Recreations, first published in 1842, contains his clearest statements about angling. From the opening part of "Fytte First," under the chapter heading "Christopher in his Sporting Jacket," Wilson's admiration for angling is crystal clear:
There is a fine and beautiful alliance between all pastimes pursued on flood, field, and fell. The principles in human nature on which they depend, are all the same [but] angling seems the earliest of them all in the order of nature. Wilson goes on to describe the angler's child-to-adult development in terms faintly reminiscent of Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality." With bent pin, worm, yarn-thread line, and willow wand, the "new-breeched urchin" catches his first prize, "a fish a quarter of an ounce in weight, and, at the very least, two inches long!" From that moment, the urchin has become transformed to a child:

Angling is no more a mere delightful daydream, haunted by the dim hopes of imaginary minnows, but a reality— an art— a science— of which the flaxen-headed schoolboy feels himself to be master— a mystery in which he has been initiated; and off he goes now all alone, in the power of successful passion to the distant brook...

From his experiences in the "huge forest of six acres," the child gains new insights and sensibilities to nature. He now has a two-piece, "half-crown" rod and a twisted-hair line— "plaited by his own soon-instructed little fingers." Soon he is fly-fishing, and soon, too,

the yellow trout forsakes his fastness beneath the bog-wood, and with a lazy wallop, and then a sudden plunge, and then a race like lightning, changes at once the child into the boy, and shoots through his thrilling and aching heart the ecstasy of a new life expanding in that glorious pastime, even as a rainbow on a sudden brightens up the sky.

Experience and time— "springs, summers, autumns, winters— each within itself longer, by many times longer than the whole year of adult life," imperceptibly but inevitably change the boy
into a youth. Adulthood comes with the landing of a salmon, a fish "fat, fair, and forty:"

"She is a salmon, therefore to be woo'd—shews a salmon, therefore to be won"—but shy, timid, capricious, headstrong, now wrathful and now full of fear, like any other female whom the cruel artist has hooked by lip or heart, and, in spite of all her struggling, will bring to the gasp at last; and then with calm eyes behold her lying in the shade dead or worse than dead, fast-fading, and to be re-illumined no more the lustre of her beauty, insensible to sun or shower, even the most perishable of all perishable things in a world of perishing!7

Elsewhere in *Recreations* Wilson makes passing comments about angling, but none is as complete as the essay commentary cited above. In his chapter entitled "Our Parish," Wilson includes a brief sketch which clearly illustrates his muscular writing style. It has, if it needs another virtue, captured a moment of truth that must surely be experienced by any serious angler:

Better far from sunrise to sunset never to move a fin, than oh! me miserable! to hook a huge hero with shoulders like a hog—play him till he comes floating side up close to the shore, and then to feel the feeble fly leave his lip and begin gamboling in the air, while he wallops away back into his native element, and sinks utterly and for evermore into the dark profound. Life loses at such a moment all that makes life desirable—yet strange! the wretch lives on—and has not the heart to drown himself, as he wrings his hands and curses his lot and the day he was born.8

Equally muscular is "Chalk Stream Studies," Charles Kingsley's single but important contribution to the pool of angling literature. By the time "Chalk Stream Studies" was first published—in 1858—delicacy was already a guiding principle of
the art of angling. Kingsley might have handled his trout with
delicacy, but he was delicate in no other way. He even took
time to spoof sentimentalism:

Beloved alder-fly! would that I
could give thee a soul...for all the
pleasant days thou hast bestowed on me.
Bah! I am becoming poetical.  

Throughout "Chalk Stream Studies" Kingsley used a modified
monologue presentation to enable him to report an imaginary companion's
thoughts and actions. The companion, of course, is the reader.
The method proved particularly valuable in painting comic
apisodes:

There,—you are through; and the Keeper shall
hand you your rod. You have torn your trousers, and
got a couple of thorns in your shins. The one can
be mended, the other pulled out. Now, jump the
feeder. There is no run to it, so,—you have jumped
in. Never mind; but keep the point of your rod up.
You are at least saved the lingering torture of
getting wet inch by inch....

It would seem that Kingsley's real worth is not found so much
in what he said, but in how he said it. He could have said,
for example, that chub were poor table fish. But not Kingsley;
that would have been too lack-lustre. Instead, he says that it
is possible to

make a most accurate imitation of him by taking
one of the Palmer's patent candles, wick and all,
stuffing it with needles and split bristles, and
then stewing the same in ditch-water.

But muscular though his style may be, and overtly
humorous though he clearly is, Charles Kingsley's descriptive
power, optimistic mood, general good nature, and genuine love for
the gentle art clearly entitle him to a place among the nineteenth
century writers of angling literature.

The less-muscular treatise by Edward Barnard, "Angling Memories and Angling Songs," appears to have been rejected by a publisher on the grounds that it was too individualistic in character, that its accidents and jokes were "too much...of a coterie." Those might be underlying reasons why the treatise was published posthumously in the Chronicles of the Houghton Fishing Club, a history and diary-type record of the club in which Barnard was for years an active member. Despite the fact that the would-be publisher's criticism appears valid, and despite the fact that much of Barnard's humor is too forced, the modern angler-reader can legitimately be pleased that Barnard's little work was published in the Chronicles.

One can learn, for example, that Barnard, who penned his treatise in 1833, made entomological observations that were clearly of the kind--though not degree--observable in the later-written works of Pulman and Ronalds. It is also worth observing that Barnard's criticism of a poem he quotes (from an 1833 edition of Penny Magazine) centers on a very minute error. Barnard moves directly from correcting the fault to passing on the conclusions he drew from personally observing what today is called "the fisherman's curse." Anglers know only too well that Barnard's statements are accurate:

The error, I conceive, has arisen from not remarking the difference between the fly in its most perfect state, after it has shifted the skin in which it quits the water, and before that change has
taken place. In the last stage it returns to the
water to deposit the egg, and dies exhausted by the
operation; in the first stage it remains a certain
time, varying probably with different species before
it returns to the water. There is in this country
a minute transparent species, but little bigger
than a small gnat, which returns to the water
frequently in myriads at sunset and is known by
the name of "the fisherman's bane"—for though
it is so minute, yet, when the fly is to be had,
the fish neglect the larger and apparently more
tempting morsel.13

Although neither the poet nor the title is identified, the
angler-reader will quickly recognize why Barnard deemed fit to
quote the nine-stanza work. Anyone who has ever observed an
aquatic insect emerge from both the water and its aquatic case
will understand that, following its struggle to break free from
its imprisoning-and-no-longer necessary shell, the newly-free
and airborne insect should rejoice. The opening stanza pictures
just such a feeling:

The sun of the eve was warm and bright,
When the May-fly burst his shell;
And he wanton'd awhile in that fair light
O'er the river's gentle swell;
And the deepening tints of the crimson sky
Still gleam'd on the wing of the glad May-fly.14

Similarly, anyone who has ever considered his own time
and place in the scheme of things, and who has considered that
the life span of different creatures in nature is suitable to
their particular modes of fulfillment, is likely to grasp the
poet's exhortation in the final stanza. Man should take a
lesson from the May-fly, and approach death with dignity and
peace of mind:
The years and the minutes are as one;
The fly drops in his twilight mirth,
And Man, when his long day's work is done
Crawls to the self-same earth.
Great Father of each! may our mortal day
Be the prelude to an endless May.15

Barnard's attempts at humor need not be repeated here.
What is more to the point is that his general good nature, and
love of both angling and external nature in all their minutae,
are evident from first to last. His justification for angling as
a praiseworthy pastime hinges partly on those loves, and partly on
the gentle craft's ability to stir interest and hope. In Barnard's
view, the difficulties of angling are a catalyst. Even the
skilled angler who has experienced a poor catch has reason to
rejoice in his art:

If only moderate success follows, it is an
admirable moral lesson to reflect upon and be
content with what we have caught; and, if the worst
befalls us, and no single fish rewards the patience
and the toil, surely the exercise, the health, the
opportunity for studying nature, ought to satisfy the
mind of a reasonable man that his time is not mis­
spent nor his labour wasted.16

The fact that nineteenth century angling sketches and
angling songs are here discussed in one chapter echoes the apparent
belief of the editors of the Chronicles and Songs of the Edinburgh
Angling Club that unity of subject matter—the angling literature
genre—was sufficient reason to include the two techniques in a
single binding. Both works are here used for two additional
purposes: to indicate the angling authors' similarity of thought
and feeling, and to serve as a transition from the prose to
verse treatments.
Whereas *Chronicles* is prose-centered, *Songs* is verse centered. The prose asides of *Songs*, like the poetic asides of prose works, reflect the spirit of the Walton tradition. Sometimes the prose passages exhibit notable angling sentiments. In a passage explaining why all manner of gentlemen—writers, lawyers, artists, men of letters and science—visit the "Robin's Nest" (headquarters of the Edinburgh Angling Club), Walton's idea that fishing re-creates the man comes quickly to mind. At the Robin's Nest, anglers "let their poor brains lie fallow for a while," and, up to their middle in the Tweed, let the fresh air blow new life into them. Similarly, a description of an angler's battle with a fresh-run salmon is worthy of the attentions of any reader not yet jaded by the concrete jungles of the Twentieth Century:

A sudden snatch sends a thrill of angelic joy up the line, down the rod, and into the fisherman's heart of hearts. "I have him!" Then comes the tug of war! Up the stream, down the stream, rushes the big fish! The reel creaks, the line spins out. Fast and furious is the struggle; but, sometimes giving, sometimes taking, always steadily keeping him on, the angler begins at last to wind him in. A silver streak is seen through the rushing stream, and, with a wild dash for freedom, the Salmon springs into the air, and falls back into the river with a splash. All in vain! and in five minutes more the shining creature is drawn gently to the bank, where Robert [Edinburgh Angling Club gillie] is waiting for him with the landing net. In half a minute twenty pounds weight of fish is gasping on the sward, and the angler knows one of those moments of supreme joy which are too seldom experienced by frail mortality.

It is worth noting, in passing, that the above prose passages are focused more on illustrating the feelings that angling can stimulate than on demonstrating the knowledge that helps make an
angler proficient. Although much of angling's prose literature is of a utilitarian bent, it is by no means true that sentiments like the above are found only in the verse expressions of the angling art. Similarly, angling poetry often includes much technical and informative data. The above-quoted verse on the May-fly is a case in point. So, too, is a ten-stanza verse written in 1840 that also appeared in the *Chronicles*. Stanzas one and five give evidence that even among those who fished the river Test, dry-fly fishing was not practiced till after 1840:

> Oh I love to stray by the purling brook  
> On a dark and windy day,  
> With my rod and my line and a well-stored book,  
> In the genial month of May.

> I steal to his haunt, and I take my stand,  
> My fly on the stream falls light;  
> The dash! the plunge! one twitch o' the hand  
> And the straining line is tight.\(^1\)

Bright, sunshiny weather was as much an anathema to the old-school wet-fly fisher as allight breeze was his ally. So, too, the "book" is a receptacle for wet flies as the "box" is for dry flies. And, finally, one of the truly remarkable phenomena of trout fly-fishing is the fact that whereas trout frequently take a wet-fly rather hurriedly, they are more inclined to gently breathe in the dry-fly.

The prose-diary *Chronicles*, published in 1908, spans a period of 86 years. *Songs of the Edinburgh Angling Club*, first published in 1858, represents an eleven-year record, the club being formed in 1847. The latter volume is clearly devoted to praising angling and its related activities through verse and
song. It is impossible to epitomize neatly the flavor of the collection, but a few sample stanzas can illustrate the breadth of sentiment and techniques used by the usually-anonymous versifiers.

In "Dum Capimus Capimur," an obvious comparison is made between life and a stream. Life, or the individual man, is transitory; the stream, or nature, is eternal. Life, like the stream, has many moods. The sentiment suggested, apparently, is that man can learn to participate passively, can learn to accept that there is harmony in the contrary of opposites:

Life is like a running stream,
Heigh ho!
Dark'ning now, and now a gleam,
On its banks we sit and dream,
Heigh ho!

Still the stream is running on
Heigh ho!
Soft o'er moss, now rough o'er stone,
Mirthful now, and now a moan,
Heigh ho!

Anglers all, we're fishing there
Heigh ho!
Catching trifles light as air,
Till death takes us unaware,
Heigh ho!

Kenmure Maitland's "Ye Lament of Ye Fraser," one of the few writer-identified works and one of the volume's longer selections, maintains a mock-heroic tone and metrical pattern throughout, makes a few barbed comments that emphasize what the angling ethic should be, and alludes to two well-known anglers of the day—Professor North and W.C. Stewart, "author of 'The Art of Angling' [sic]...."21 The incident described evidently occurred:
But at the Boat-pool something rare occurred, 
Which, with the serious, mingled the absurd. 
The man who fishes salmon with a Bob [dropper fly], 
True anglers look on rather as a snob. 
Well! not to put on it a point too fine, 
Henderson this day had one on his line; 
And in the Boat-pool as his fish he played, 
And Stewart keenly rushes to his aid, 
The bob-hook caught the latter by the nose, 
(Peeling now he knows a fish's woes) 
Which gave our author, as that fish was dangling, 
Practical new hints in the art of angling! 
Then, by the margin of that Pool, I ween, 
Were three well-hooked proboscis to be seen— 
Yes! Stewart's with the Salmon's, on the cast, 
And the Professor's—not the least though last! 
Did not that beak foreshadow long ago, 
By hook and crook that he'd defeat each foe? 
Stewart, poor soul! had nothing of his own, 
A fish hooked him, but he, alas! hooked none.22

"The Old Nest and the New" might well be dismissed as 
trite sentimentality. Nevertheless, it exhibits a strong feeling 
of honest human emotion. Slaves to Wall-Street ticker tape 
could never understand the feeling, the gentleness with which 
an angler could write about his favorite river: 

   Of all the bends on silver Tweed 
   Where is there one so fair, 
   As that in front of Fernielee, 
   The famed Boat-pool of Yair? 
   The fringing trees droop tenderly 
   From banks of sward all green, 
   And in the waters, passing by, 
   Their mirror'd grace is seen; 
   And when the summer zephyrs blow, 
   And swing the branches hanging low, 
   Soft kisses pass between.23

Yet another collection of angling songs that originated 
with the members of an angling club is the Newcastle Fishers' 
Garland, a short title for A Collection of Right Merrie Garlands 
for North Country Anglers, which includes the sixteen poems
published in 1852 by Thomas Doubleday under the title "The Coquetdale Fishing Songs, now first collected and edited by a North Country Angler." 24

Written over a period of nearly one-half century, the poems of the Garland were collected and edited by Joseph Crawhall in 1864. Appropriately enough, his edition was dedicated to the members of the Coquet-Dale Angling Club,

with an earnest hope that the lines herein cast may perchance rise some stray Roxby [Robert Boxby] or Doubleday of that honourable body, and induce an attempt to resume and continue the Newcastle Fishers' Garlands, so charmingly set forth by the spirits of a former generation. 25

The thoroughness with which Crawhall carried out his editing responsibilities suggests the seriousness of his feelings. Not only was he able to include the names of most of the contributing poets, but also the number of separate copies which were published prior to the Garland. His explanatory note to "The Auld Fisher's Fareweel to Coquet" indicates how carefully he performed his task:

Two hundred and ninety copies were printed for Emerson Charnley, March 26, 1825, and "one hundred copies presented to the author," (Robert Roxby), though the Garland is the joint production of Roxby and Doubleday. Woodcut on title --landscape with angler plugged in—by Isaac Nicholson. Published in "Coquetdale Fishing Songs," 1852. 26

An epitomizing of the Garland, like the Songs, is clearly beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, passages from "The Auld Fisher's Farweel" and two other poems (all three were selected at random from the collection) do point up why angling is
called the gentle art. Stanzas five and six of the six-stanza "Farweel" capture the tension between knowledge of the future and knowledge of the past, between a longing for a return to youth and acceptance of coming death. The address to the loved stream echoes what anglers often seem to accept virtually as fact: that the various aspects of external nature have a rather life-like and personal integrity:

Ance mair I'll touch we' gleesome foot
Thy waters clear and cold,
Ance mair I'll cheat the gleg-e'ed trout,
    An' wile him frae his hold;
Ance mair, at Weldon's frien'ly door,
    I'll wind my tackle up,
An' drink "Success to Coquet-side,"
    Though a tear fa' in the cup.

An' then fareweel, dear Coquet-side!
    Aye gaily may thou rin,
An' lead thy waters sparkling on,
    An' dash frae linn to linn;
Blithe be the music o' thy streams
    An' banks through after-days
An' blithe be every Fisher's heart
    Shall ever tread thy? Braes!27

William Andrew Chatto's four-stanza verse, "The Fisher's Call," was written in 1842, seventeen years after the "Farweel." The poem's images, sentiment, and rhythm might today be classified as trite, but there is a rather captivating and appealing rural innocence that, in addition to the direct mention of the mild-maid, faintly reminds of Walton. Dawn, the day in innocence, is presented as being worthy of worship largely because all elements then blend harmoniously together. The flower seems to offer its dew to a thirsty sun. The first two stanzas follow:
The moor-cock is crowing o'er mountain and fell,
And the sun drinks the dew from the blue heather-bell;
Her song of the morning the lark sings on high,
And hark, 'tis the milk-maid a-carolling by.

Then up, fishers, up! to the waters away!
Where the bright trout is leaping in search of his prey.

Oh, what can the joys of the angler excel,
As he follows the stream in its course through the dell!
Where every wild flower is blooming in pride,
And the blackbird sings sweet, with his mate by his side.

Then up, fishers, up! to the waters away!
Where the bright trout is leaping in search of his prey.

"The Morning Airly," written by Thomas Doubleday in
1852, again stresses that the angler, like nature, should be up
and active in the early morning. The first and last stanzas of
the six-stanza poem are sufficient to illustrate that Doubleday
has been well-schooled in the Walton tradition. The "far aff an'
fine," of the refrain is an unmistakeable reference to a
principal piece of fishing advice handed on by Walton's first
disciple, Charles Cotton. The direct attack on roe-users is a
negative way of pointing up fishing ethics, and the observation
that May floods flush salmon fry to the sea is a statement
of scientific accuracy:

It's late, my Lad, to tak' the Gad;
All nature's now in motion;
The flood o' May hae swept away
The Sawmon's fry to Ocean;
In Dewshill, lang, the Throstle's sang
He's been rehearsin' cheerly;
Our only line's "far aff an' fine,"
And tak' the mornin' airly!

When floods come down, a callant loon
May catch them [trout] wi' a tether,
And sawmon roe, be a' "the go"
For gowks in rainy weather,
But gi'e to me the light midge flee,
When streams are rinnin' clearly,
And a-cast o' line "far aff an' fine,"
All in the mornin' airly!29
Understandably, the poems of the Chronicles, Songs, and Newcastle Garland are simply too short to provide much in the line of useful information about fishing. But not all nineteenth century poetry of angling is short, and some of the longer works are clearly intended to be read as handbooks. One such is T.W. Charleton's The Art of Fishing: A Poem, published in 1819. Much of the advice is sound enough, but it is the undertone of concern for nature that deserves most praise. Charleton's powers of observation might seem obvious to the more sophisticated angler of the twentieth century, but the truth to his warning (based on personal observation of fish behavior) is nonetheless worth quoting:

Or up the stream, or down, or cross,
The angler may his branling toss,
   Though up we mostly throw;
   Because if streams are now so clear,
   That you must to the fish appear,
   If you should toss below.30

Charleton's mention of branling (a type of worm) neither proves nor disproves that he was for or against all bait fishing. But, it is interesting to note that immediately following a passage in which he explains how to use roe bait, he discusses poaching:

Ripe salmon raw the trout will lure,
   Which with a little salt you cure,
   But be it gently dried:
   From the full salmon take your spawn,
   This cross the stream like minnow's drawn,
   Or like the branling tried.

More schemes are by ignoble men
   Much us'd, beneath the poet's pen,
   Fit for the poaching tribe;
   But rather cease to flow, my muse,
   Than stoop such abject themes to chuse,
   Or such mean arts describe.31
Although Carleton's verse might never win high praise as poetry, it is certain that a considerable degree of skill was necessary to weave his message into what must be called a remarkably smooth-flowing verse pattern. His pronoun references sometimes cause temporary confusion, but the reader who knows the habits of the salmonids also knows that Charleton's observations are basically sound:

For should not trouts their embryo hide,
In the deep grav'ly bed's inside,
The streams would wash't away:
And should they haunt the sluggish wave,
The other tribes would never save
Their spawn, to trouts a prey.

Salmon and trout alike conceal
Their helpless spawn, lest it should feel
Th' effects of hunger keen;
For both respectively will prey,
On their own spawn if wash'd away,
And if by either seen.32

Charleton's precise observation is illustrated in his careful choice of "sluggish wave," which correctly specifies the place of salmon and trout spawning as being in the quieter, more sheltered waters of a river or stream.

G.P.R. Pulman's ability to make accurate observations has already been illustrated in the chapter dealing with angling handbooks of the nineteenth century. It was observed, there, that in writing his Vade-Mecum, Pulman was aware that he was not writing anything that resembled poetry. It was also observed that his Vade-Mecum was probably little read. Pulman's Rustic Sketches, published in 1842 (one year after the Vade-Mecum) shares one distinction with the earlier work: it was likely read by few
people. In his brief "Preface," Pulman acknowledges that Sketches was largely made possible by the patronage of subscribers. This does not suggest, however, that his verses were read by few. On the contrary, since "a considerable number" of them had appeared earlier in the Sherborne Journal, it is likely that Pulman's poetry was at least moderately well known.

Whereas the avowed purpose of the Vade-Mecum was to pass on practical advice on how to fish, Sketches is clearly intended to entertain, not teach, the reader. Pulman includes some prose passages—from Walton, Sir Humphry Davy, Thomas Stoddart, and his own Vade-Mecum—and one moderately long poem. The prose passages largely serve to shed light on the verses, or to state the circumstances which gave rise to the poems. The lengthy poem pokes fun at a posturing Cockney fop and his inability to fish.

It is the shorter poems which will be considered here. But first, Pulman's warnings about his use of dialect should be mentioned. Pulman believed that the dialect—of East Devon—would, from its homely and familiar character, tend to procure the attention necessary to produce the end desired. Great pains have been taken to follow as closely as possible the vulgar idiom of [the] district, in order to preserve some of [the] peculiar features which "the schoolmaster" is so rapidly and effectually changing.

In one of his shorter poems, "Pleasures of Angling," Pulman's indebtedness to Walton is not only obvious but acknowledged. A prefatory prose passage from the Compleat Angler precedes the poem, and prose praise of Walton follows it: "Who has not read,
with profit and delight, the exquisite work from which our motto to this song is taken?" The poem is short enough to be reproduced in its entirety:

A happy life es passed by we
Who in th' fiel's da like ta be,
An' by th' stream ta stalk about
Wi' rod an' line, aketchin' trout.
We don't want carpet-rooms, ner halls,
Ner music-consarts, dancing balls,
Ner nit no coaches, painted fine,
Wi' liv'ry servants up behine.

While we can treyde th' grass, an' vish,
An' hev' th' luck ta ketch a dish,
An' hear th' birds ta zing away,
An' zee th' gurt fat bullicks play
(Then think what famious beef they'd make
An' how we'd eyte a gurdl'd steak),
In eyv'nin' zit our furns among,
An' tull our tale, an' zing our zong,
An' blow a cloud, an' drink a pot—
We invy no man what'e've got.

"Pleasures" is in no particular need of explanation.

"Catching a Salmon with Trout Tackle," a poem inspired by a passage in Sir Humphry Davy's *Salmonia*, is another matter. A first reading might cause confusion if it is not understood that Pulman is imitating the dialogue technique used by Davy. As he plays his fish, the angler-persona describes his actions. A row of asterisks signals a time lapse between the second and third stanzas. Throwing stones to move big fish (stanza two) is still much practiced. The girth measurement (stanza five) signals the fact that according to Pulman's sense of esthetics--like those of modern-day anglers--fat fish are more desirable than lean fish. Somehow the "hul-lup! hurn! hurn! I've hook'd a vish" of Pulman's opening line seems far more salutatory than the
brief "fish on" shouted by modern-day steelheaders.

Hul-lup! hurn! hurn! I've hook'd a vish;
Lor'! Lor!! how ee da pool;
My rod da beynd, an' reyl da whizz,
As thoff I'd hook'd a bool.

Peck in a stwone behind theck weed.
Wull sed! Now hurn below;
Work en wull, an' he'll be mine
In 'bout a nour or zo.

I'll try ta tow en, if I can,
'Pon theck there zandy beych,
He's jist done up--another flounce
Ell drow en in thy reych.

Hooraw! hooraw! hip, hip, hooraw!
By gar th' job es done;
Es landed saff--let's lug en off
An' hev zum jolly fun.

A darn gurt whackin' salmon 'tis--
Da waigh most twenty poun'!
He's zix-an'-thirty inches long,
An' nigh 'pon twenty roun'!

Preceding "An Autumn Flood," a poem too long to be reproduced here, Pulman quotes a few lines from James Thomson's *The Seasons,* and then pleads with anglers to release ripe fish:

The angler should never neglect to return to the water such fish whose appearance indicates their approach to the period of fulfilling the divine command.

In the two stanzas quoted below, Pulman tells of the salmon's overpowering spawning drive and subsequent and slower return to the sea, and complains of the poaching of both the downstream adult fish (kelts) and the ocean-bound salmon fry:
An' now's th' time th' salmon up to vly,
Dru theck an' theene the'r ripen'd spawn ta lie;
Ta reych th' highist paart they onward tares,
A-jumpin' auver steep an' voamin' weirs.
By instinct guided, zoon the'r work they doos,
An' then once moore slow back to sey they goos.

But lor!! nit one in fifty gits there saff—
Th! cussid poachers be too sharp by half;
An! when, in spring, th' grav'lin' small be hatch'd,
In trammels fine dree paarts o'm 's alwiz catch'd.
A thousan' pitties but sitch things was stapp'd,
An' they that doos 'em inta jail was clapp'd!

It is probably true that by using dialect Pulman' has
made his work less popular, if not less artistic. It is even
possible that a charge levelled against the Newcastle Fishers' Garlands
might apply equally well to Rustic Sketches. That
criticism praised many of the Garland verses for reaching high
levels, but went on to say that others suffered from being presented
in dialect, which "is good only when you cannot imagine [them] having
been written in another medium." That dialect can cause more
trouble than it might be worth must have been recognized by
Thomas Tod Stoddart. Stoddart, a Scot, seldom wrote his angling
songs in dialect. One of the few occasions in which he used
dialect, his poem, "My Fisher Lad," was more personal and less
angling-centered than usual. That Stoddart was an outstanding
angling author is difficult to deny. Andrew Lang said it was
fair to consider Stoddart in the same breath with Izaak Walton,
and Christopher North rated some of Stoddart's verse compositions
among the best ever written. Although prose passages by
Stoddart have deservedly been quoted by other authors of angling
works, his verses have won even more attention. And, because
"information, ideas, and methods soon become merged in the common pool of knowledge, while songs are personal and may be perennial," it is more than likely that Stoddart will be best remembered for his poetry.  

The best-yet collection of Stoddart's poetry appears in *An Angler's Rambles and Angling Songs*, first published in 1866. Ironically, perhaps, *Rambles* is basically a prose work, a prose diary of Stoddart's fishing experiences. (Some of the "sketches" had previously been published "in the pages of a weekly sporting paper published in London."  

Despite the fact that the bulk of *Rambles* is in prose, as indeed is the bulk of Stoddart's contribution to angling literature, only his verse—and very little of that—can be considered here.  

A single stanza from "The Taking of a Salmon" is enough to illustrate the aptness of the high praise that has been showered on Stoddart:  

A birr! a whirr! a salmon's on,  
A goodly fish! a thumper!  
Bring up, bring up the ready gaff,  
And if we land him we shall quaff  
Another glorious bumper!  
Hark! 'tis the music of the reel,  
The strong, the quick, the steady;  
The line darts from the active wheel,  
Have all things right and ready.  

To any angler who has ever battled a big fish in strong water, that stanza speaks with uncanny accuracy. The sound unmistakably suits the sense. It would be difficult to miss the rhythm of a fishing reel being roughly used by a salmon. Doubtless Stoddart's lines remind many an angler of similar experiences, and in the reminding, rekindle pleasure. The once-traditional toasting of
a victory over a salmon might now be passe, but the excitement of such fish encounters will last till salmon are a thing of the past.

Throughout his verses, Stoddart demonstrates both his own contemplative nature and a genuine, deep-rooted love for the gentle art. In the final stanza of "The Gentle Craft," the "meditative art" is shown to be reason enough for man's existence:

We love the angler's quiet lot,
    His meditative art;
The fancies in his hour of thought
    That blossoms from his heart.
All other things we'll cast behind,
    Let busy toil alone,
And flinging care unto the wind,
    We'll angle, angle on.46

In "The Vindication," Stoddart suggests that the critics of angling are far more inclined toward cruelty than are anglers. Anglers are presented as being willing captives of nature. They do not seek the warrior's fame; nor do they have the merchant's or bureaucrat's guile; they simply share in the freely-offered and quiet delights of a quiet pastime. The poem:

Say not our hands are cruel,
    What deeds provoke the blame?
Content our golden jewel,
    No blemish on our name;
Creation's lords,
    We need no swords
To win a withering fame.

Say not in gore and guile
    We waste the live-long day;
Let those alone revile
    Who feel our subtle sway,
    When fancy-led
    The sward we tread,
And while the morn away.
Oh! not in camp or court
   Our best delights we find,
But in some loved resort
   With water, wood, and wind:
   Where nature works,
   And beauty lurks
In all her craft enshrined.

There captive to her will,
   Yet, 'mid our fetters free,
We seek by singing rill
   The green and shady tree,
   And chant our lay
   To flower and fay,
Or list the linnet's glee.

Thus glides the golden hour
   Until the chimes to toil
Recall from brook and bower;
   Then, laden with our spoil,
   With beating heart
   We kindly part,
And leave the haunted soil.

Though far less haunting than the poetry of Stoddart,
the four-canto long *Lay of the Last Angler* by Robert Liddell
is nonetheless a considerable piece of craftsmanship. First
published in 1867, the *Lay* is basically a descriptive narrative
firmly based on the poet's fishing experiences. The reader is led
from fish caught to fish lost, over rocks and through streams,
and somehow, through it all, Liddell manages to keep his reader
on his line. Even the digressions—sometimes involving mythological
figures, sometimes concerning a philosophic point—fail to
break the spell. Although Liddell takes a far more muscular
pose than do most authors of angling works (his verse is not
unworthy of comparison with the prose of Colquhoun, Wilson, or
Kingsley), he is clearly a devotee of the gentle art. Liddell
may rush after his salmon—indeed what salmon fisherman has not--
but his rushing seems to be in harmony with the river fishing he describes, and evidence of his open response to untamed nature.

Liddell uses two evenly-metred rhyme schemes. In Cantos I and III, he writes in couplets. Here he is at his best. In Cantos II and IV, he writes in quatrains having an abab rhyme pattern. The Lay does not conceal deeply hidden truth, and except for a few passages which might require explanation from an experienced angler, it can be read at the literal level. He starts inauspiciously but appropriately enough by invoking the muse:

Come, quill of swan, or goose or hen,  
Or anything that makes a pen;  
Come, ink and blotting-book and paper,  
With sealing-wax and vesta taper,  
And envelope of usual size  
To hide my thoughts from curious eyes;  
Lend me your aid, for want of better,  
To write a sort of comic letter....

Overlooking Liddell's use of dialect when reporting his gillie's utterances, it is worth pausing on a passage which illustrates sound advice. The hazardous "tailing" technique Liddell describes cannot be performed any more safely than he reports. His quarry is a rod-wearied salmon:

His tail affords a fatal grasp,  
Quite easy for the hand to clasp—  
I don't attempt to lift him yet,  
For fish are slippery when they're wet;  
But from the water turn his snout,  
And as he lies, just tail him out!  
Sliding him cannily up the shingle,  
While temples throb, and fingers tingle.

In Canto II, Liddell takes time out to comment on drainage problems and pollution, and to make the observation that sea-
lice on a salmon are a test of its being fresh-run from the sea. His claim "And as it can't survive above a week / Out of the reach of salt or tidal water..." is still accepted as the maximum fresh-water survival span for the salt-water parasite.

Liddell's blend of fact, wit, and philosophy can be seen in one of the more typical fish-pursuit passages, here much abbreviated. A promising stretch of fishing water has just been described:

'Twas such a cast I laid my fly on,  
When, with a rush like savage lion,  
A lordly salmon seized the hook,  
And found himself for once "mistook"...  
Soon as I felt my hold secure, he  
Lashed himself into downright fury;  
Ran out—as hard as he could go,  
Straight as an arrow from a bow—  
Some sixty yards of line or more,  
Until he neared the farther shore...  
"Hullo!" says Science, "that's bucolic,  
A missile's line is parabolic;  
Your simile's inclined to be  
More what we call hyperbole—  
That is, in what you here relate  
You're tempted to exaggerate."  
Oh, bosh! your strictures are too fine,  
They don't apply to reel and line—  
My words are never meant to be  
Discussed by dry philosophy.  
Don't pester me with hydrostatics,  
Or lines and curves of mathematics!  
I write for brothers of the angle,  
Who with my phrases will not wrangle...  
But to my tale: when he leapt out,  
And showed his form, so hugh and stout....

After several more pages, the reader—by this time sympathetic with the cause—reads the sad conclusion:

The rod had lost its graceful bend,  
And pointed sky-ward with its end!  
In short, the enemy had retreated,  
Leaving us utterly defeated.
The kindly critic will see some of Stoddart and some of Liddell in Richard Glover's *An Angler's Strange Experiences*, first published in 1883. What Glover has from either of his predecessors in print, he has in smaller measure. His wit is not so sustained as is Liddell's; nor is his quiet mood so penetrating as is Stoddart's. Glover calls his humorous verses "staves," and his serious verses "interludes." He numbers both. In the first half of the book, Glover is mostly humorous, and staves outnumber interludes. In the second half of the book, he is more serious, and the reverse is true. His mood is reflected in his verse form, the couplet being a constant of the staves.

Though Glover's poetry is unlikely to appeal to the fastidious critic, both his intent and his obvious scholarship deserve mention. His medley of verses, like Sir Humphry Davy's *Salmonia*, was written during a period of illness, and was clearly intended to provide more than mere amusement:

> The lyrics interspersed will, he hopes gratify the taste of the most refined, and subserve a far higher purpose than the mere amusement of an idle hour. Long before the days of good old Izaak, even the poets of antiquity have discerned not only a poetical, but even an ethical element in the angler's art.54

Glover's comic material—including his poking fun of that supposed critic of angling, Dr. Johnson, and including his knowledgeable and witty footnote commentaries—would disproportionately swell this study were they included. Let it suffice, here, to reproduce Interlude I, "The Angler and the
Brook." Apart from a few words and phrases, there is little that will confuse even the non-angler.

To the non-angler, however, it may help to know that the "duns and browns" of the first stanza refer to insects, that the "wand" of the second stanza refers to a fishing rod, and that the "many a gold and coral gem" of the third stanza refers to trout. Without more ado, here is the entire poem:

The west wind wafts the scent of May
Adown the verdant valleys;
The friendly sun with temper'd ray
Peers forth from cloudy alleys,
And, in his gleams, the duns and browns
In joy of life are winging,
While I, afar from noisy towns,
Go forth to angle singing.

Anon the music of the brook
Sounds near in happy chorus;
Her beaming face with laughing look
Sings, O the joy before us!
I greet her with a look as bright,
And away my wand above her;
She glances coy, pretending fright,
Yet knows me for her lover.

Through cowslip meadows, side by side,
We wander, fondly clinging
Each unto each, like groom and bride,
No turns estrangement bringing;
And many a gold and coral gem
She takes from out her bosom,
And, proud, at eve she gives me them,
Beneath the hawthorn's blossom.

I stoop and kiss her pure, sweet lips,
And mine she softly presses,
Then turns aside, and shyly dips
Beneath her drooping tresses;
Then babbling on in laughing glee,
Assumed to hide her sorrow,
She pauses 'neath a willow-tree,
And sings, Return to-morrow!
Footnotes


2 Ibid., IV, 436-37.


4 Ibid., p. 6.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid., p. 165.


10 Ibid., p. 36.

11 Ibid., p. 66.


13 Ibid., p. 226.

14 Ibid., p. 225.

15 Ibid., p. 226.

16 Ibid., p. 184.

18 Ibid., pp. 144-45.


20 Edinburgh, p. 63.

21 Ibid., p. 114.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., p. 152.


25 Ibid., p. v.

26 Ibid., p. 45.

27 Ibid., pp. 46-47.

28 Ibid., p. 121.

29 Ibid., pp. 179-80.


31 Ibid., p. 33.

32 Ibid., p. 34.


34 Ibid., p. iii.

35 Ibid., pp. iii-iv.

36 Ibid., p. 23.
37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., p. 28.

39 Ibid., p. 53.

40 Ibid., p. 55.


43 Ibid., p. 23.


46 Ibid., p. 46.


49 Ibid., pp. 36-37.

50 Ibid., p. 60.

51 Ibid., p. 62.

52 Ibid., pp. 93-95.

53 Ibid., p. 97.


55 Ibid., pp. 8-9.
The Principals

Anyone who has waded beyond his knees into the river of nineteenth century angling literature will recognize that the casts made in this chapter are neither fine nor far-reaching. They tease, as it were, the shallows of the river. But this is a Sunday fishing excursion only; it is not an attempt to depopulate the river of all its treasures. The basic problem, of course, is that the river is simply too overwhelming. In order to say that the entire river has been sampled, some attractive reaches must be bypassed.

Although most of the authors considered here have deservedly earned their considerable reputations, it would be inaccurate to suggest that they are the only worthwhile angling authors of the nineteenth century, or that they are the undisputed leaders. Much depends on interpretation and personal values. Some readers might dismiss Edward Marston as a mere rambler; others might charge that William Senior uses a great many words to say very little, or that F.M. Halford is simply too much the elitist to qualify as an important voice of the century's angling fraternity. Understandably, there would be many who would claim that Ronalds and Stewart simply cannot be considered anything but principal writers of nineteenth century angling literature.
Having considered these and other protests, it was decided that handbook writers did not qualify as "principal writers" simply because their works did not contain the breadth and quality required to make them of lasting interest. Facts have a habit of becoming generally known, or outdated. In either event, fact-centered works have little likelihood of being considered artistic. Similarly, those writers who made only incidental forays into the area of angling literature—either in prose or verse—were seriously handicapped since volume of output was held to be of some account.

The matter of volume should not be misinterpreted. Three of the nine authors considered in this chapter—Sir Humphry Davy, William Scrope, and Andrew Lang—contributed only one volume apiece. But each of those three volumes is outstanding. Nor should it be thought that every work by every writer is evaluated. That would make impossible that which is already probably too prodigious.

What is undertaken here, is the discussion—however briefly—of some thirty titles. In an attempt to minimize the confusion arising out of such a study, the century has been divided into early, middle, and later periods. A certain arbitrariness was necessary since many of the works are collections of articles which first appeared—over varying periods of time—in periodicals of the day, and since several authors' contributions spanned a wide range in years, or even overlapped into the twentieth century. Accordingly, each author's first publishing date—
including the date for collected articles—was used as the determining factor.

Arbitrary though it is, three authors can be grouped into each of the divisions. The early writers are Davy, Stoddart, and Scrope. The middle-period writers are Francis Francis, Senior, and Marston. In the late period are Halford, Lang, and Lord Grey. Although nine of the thirty titles were published after the turn of the century, they were deemed valid inclusions simply because they came from the pens of authors already firmly established during the nineteenth century.

The first-published of the early writers was Sir Humphry Davy, member of the Royal Society, chemist, and natural philosopher. His *Salmonia, or Days of Fly-Fishing*, first published in 1828, is a book-length acknowledgement of Izaak Walton. That Davy was deeply influenced by *The Compleat Angler* is illustrated by his attempt to revive Walton's style. Davy imitated Walton because the "conversational manner and discursive style best suited [his poor] state of health."¹ Even Davy's stated purpose—to entertain

> those persons who derive pleasure from the simplest and most attainable kind of rural sports, and who practice the art, or patronize the objects of contemplation, of the Philosophical Angler—²

recalls *The Compleat Angler*.

There can be little doubt that *Salmonia* is damaged by the use of dialogue, a form which probably met its master only in Walton. Despite this shortcoming, however, Davy's influence on
later writers—and non-writers—is incalculable. Many writers of angling works refer to, or directly quote from *Salmonia*, and they obviously regard Davy's opinions on practical and philosophical matters well worthy of attention. Ronalds is a case in point, and Francis even wondered if Davy was not the catalyst for a series of experiments regarding the artificial rearing of salmon in Britain.³

In matters of natural science, Davy is occasionally ultra-modern. On salmon and sea trout behaviour, he anticipates a theory that has only come to full flower since 1950:

I have sometimes thought that the rising of salmon and sea trout at these bright flies, as soon as they come from the sea into rivers, might depend upon a sort of imperfect memory of their early food and habits; for flies form a great part of the food of the salmon fry....⁴

*Salmonia* is ripe with philosophical material. Some of the more notable sentiments and observations: "...confidence in success is a great means of ensuring it";⁵ "...when the water is low and clear in this river, the Galway fishermen resort to the practice of fishing with a naked hook, endeavouring to entangle it in the bodies of the fish;--a most unartistlike practice";⁶ "courage is the result of strong passions or strong motives; and in man it usually results from the love of glory or the fear of shame...";⁷ "the most important principle, perhaps, in life is to have a pursuit--a useful one if possible, and at all events an innocent one".⁸

Davy is no different from so many other authors of angling works in that he, too, felt it necessary to justify the pastime.
To the question, "Why fish?" Davy has his accomplished fly-fisher, Halieus, reply: "The search after food is an instinct belonging to our nature...." Halieus goes on to say that, although the overt object is the same as in the crude hunting down of fish, the highest form of fishing is also an art. And, importantly, it supplies pleasure while being a moral discipline.

Angling, Halieus says, "requires patience, forbearance, and command of temper. As connected with natural science, it [demands] knowledge of a high order."

No matter what attractions Salmonia might hold for future readers, the popularity it once enjoyed cannot be erased. It once attracted the attention of both Walter Scott, who reviewed it, and the world, which read it. From the outset of his review—in The Quarterly Review, Vol. XXXVIII, 1828—Scott's admiration for Salmonia—and for Davy—is unreserved:

When great men condescend to trifle, they desire that those who witness their frolics should have some kindred sympathy with the subject which these regard... In taking up this elegant little volume, for which we are indebted to the most illustrious and successful investigator of inductive philosophy which this age has produced, we are led to expect to discover the sage even in his lightest amusements.

We are informed, in the preface, that many months of severe and dangerous illness have been partially occupied and amused by the present treatise, when the author was incapable of attending to more useful studies or more serious pursuits. While we regret that the current of scientific investigation, which has led to such brilliant results, should be, for a moment, interrupted, we have here an example, and a pleasing one, that the lightest pursuits of such a man as our angler—nay, the productions of those languid hours, in which lassitude succeeds to pain, are more interesting and instructive that the
exertion of the talents of others whose mind and body are in the fullest vigour,—illustrating the scriptural expression, that the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim are better than the vintage of Abiezer.\textsuperscript{11}

Scott, himself a practitioner of the gentle art, gives the "palm of originality, and of an exquisite simplicity which cannot, perhaps, be imitated with entire success"\textsuperscript{12} to Walton, but credits Davy with a greater "range of experience of every kind...."\textsuperscript{13} In his own defense of angling, Scott points out that all participants of blood sports are "in a state of nature".\textsuperscript{14} He goes on to question both the understanding and the motives of the critics of angling. In their arguments, he says, "whether used in jest or earnest, there is always something of cant".\textsuperscript{15} Scott ends his lengthy attack on those who fail to recognize their complicity in the killing of living things by asking a central question:

Of the hundreds who condemn the cruelty of field sports, how many would relish being wholly deprived, in their own sensitive persons, of animal food?\textsuperscript{16}

Significantly, were Scott's comments pared to the bone, they would likely emerge as echoes of two of Davy's central statements: that field sports arise from natural instincts,\textsuperscript{17} and that, were the critics of angling to pursue their topic to the logical extension, they would have to "cite almost all the objects of pursuit of rational beings....\textsuperscript{18}

That Scott frequently disgresses from the path of pure review to travel the routes of his own thinking suggests the inspirational power of \textit{Salmonia}. The nature of his asides is
even more telling. Perhaps the main cause for the scarcity of salmon, Scott says, is the hard-to-remedy moral turpitude of man, for while erroneous practices may be corrected when the cure is to be applied to passive nature, it is almost impossible to remedy those evils which spring from the clashing interests, passions, and prejudices of mankind.

When in his review mood, Scott often relies more on quoting than he does on commentary, a practice that can be adopted here in relation to a passage that Scott rates as "highly philosophical." Scott's brief commentary is here followed by Davy's passage:

The following passage, which concludes a train of remarks upon the superstitious belief in omens, coming, as it does, from the author of Salmonia, ought to impose a check on that vulgar incredulity which is disposed to disbelieve all which it cannot understand.

In my opinion, profound minds are the most likely to think lightly of the resources of human reason; and it is the pert, superficial thinker who is generally strongest in every kind of unbelief. The deep philosopher sees chains of causes and effects so wonderfully and strangely linked together, that he is usually the last person to decide upon the impossibility of any two series of events being independent of each other; and, in science, so many natural miracles, as it were, have been brought to light,—such as the fall of stones from meteors in the atmosphere, the disarming a thunder cloud by a metallic point, the production of fire from ice by a metal white as silver, and referring certain laws of motion of the sea to the moon,—that the physical inquirer is seldom disposed to assert, confidently, on any abstruse subjects belonging to the order of natural things, and still less so on those relating to the more mysterious relations of moral events and intellectual natures.

The second angling writer of the early period—Thomas Tod Stoddart—goes one better (or worse) than Davy. In his attempt to revive Walton's conversational style, Stoddart also adds large
doses of dialect, but neither technique survives his first-published work, the *Angling Reminiscences of the Rivers and Lochs of Scotland*, printed in 1837. In the "Preface" to *Angling Reminiscences*, Stoddart explains his use of dialogue and dialect. His explanation smacks somewhat of an attempt to capture the language of the common man. "These sketches," he says,

> are endued by the author with a colloquial form and texture, chiefly because he is of the opinion that, so habited, they accord better with the spirit of the subject to which they refer. Had it been otherwise, he should not have obtruded upon a mode of composition already preoccupied by the patriarch Walton, Sir Humphry Davy, and others.

The dialect-dialogue combination reaches a high point in an encounter between the gentlemen (the contemplative anglers) and the ruffians (the poachers). The ruffians are soundly thrashed, and, of course, there is moral justification for it all. The "ugly customers"

> have only served to create misery and oppression, and withal to encourage the increase of crime. [They are], in fact, ... a set of worthless miscreants, and reduced debauchees—men, of course, who have few pretensions to principle, and fewer still to those golden charities of the heart, those tendrils of our natural philanthropy, which have adorned the virtuous in all ages. What such creatures effect in the way of contaminating an unguarded people is almost incredible.

The several-pages-long passage comes to an end with a well-reported and not completely humourless fist-fight:

> 2nd Poacher. Faith, Jock, its Kittlish wark gettin' a grip o' him... Deil tak him! if the varmint hasna driven twa o' my foreteeth doon my thrapple. It's waesome to part wi' sic auld freends....
4th Poacher. It's time for us to be aff, callants! I'm a' a clod o' sairs. They're no canny customers thae gentry.23

Despite the strains created by the dialogue and dialect—which peak when various species of fish are given speaking parts—Angling Reminiscences is basically a pleasant enough book. And, except for fairly extensive treatment of fishing locations, the handbook information is relatively unobtrusive. In the main, the work is a collection of incidents that presumably involved Stoddart and several of his angling companions. An abbreviation of one such incident is enough to suggest Stoddart's story-telling ability, witty style, and general good humor. The hero, Tom Otter, has just hooked a Tweed salmon. The salmon, calmly as you please, has turned

like a philosopher, and leisurely walked up the stream, as if meditating upon the three Fates. Suddenly, however it coursed in a new direction..., lashing with its tail at the line, and plunging about with considerable violence.... Otter had to use his legs to some purpose, in order to save his line, which birred off the reel like a string of lightning [till], as it happened, he was confronted by a brother angler, engaged like himself with a fast salmon. A collision was evident, more especially as the...other angler seemed determined to keep his ground, and preserve the full altitude of his rod, although Otter's run of line was considerably the longer.... Although requested by Otter to alter his position and lower his rod, both of which he might have done without the slightest risk of losing the fish, he not-withstanding thought proper to remain obstinately immovable...[whereupon Otter tripped the villain] in such a manner that he popped directly into the river, and commenced floundering for his life in the midst of the rapid current. There arose a sort of dilemma to our friend, who was forthwith called upon to hesitate betwixt the poacher and the salmon; and really, thought he, if to save the one I must relinquish the other, it is not gain to me. Accordingly, he
continued at his fish, notwithstanding the imprecations of the drowning man. These, however, were becoming every moment less vehement. 24

Otter was a man of many qualities. Being a good fisherman, he quickly landed and dispatched his salmon (a thirty-pounder). Being a good swimmer, he then quickly landed the exhausted sufferer. And, being good humored, he politely bowed in acknowledgment of the mortified angler's good wishes, and [offered] him the fins of his huge salmon as a recompense for all loss and damage sustained [the villain's grilse was gone, and his tackle much injured] in his perilous voyage down the Tweed. He then shouldered his fish, and trudged off to another pool, with a snatch of an old ballad in his mouth. 25

Compared to Reminiscences, Stoddart's Rambles—discussed in the previous chapter—and The Angler's Companion to the Rivers and Lochs of Scotland—first published in 1847—are less humorous but more philosophical. Not the least of their value stems from Stoddart's recording of historically-significant concerns such as the introduction of roe bait to the waters of the Leigh, 26 birth of the Professor Fly, 27 fear that the Scottish rivers might too soon be as damaged by pollution as were the English rivers, 28 and a statistical analysis of the economic importance of salmon fisheries—which clearly anticipated Grimble's detailed study of one-half century later. 29

That the later Stoddart is more pensive than the earlier Stoddart can be illustrated by citing two passages from Rambles. Though they occur pages apart, the second passage is clearly an expansion—or description—of the philosophic posture adopted in the first:
I may here remark that all sights and sounds in which water acts a leading part, exercise a special influence, quite distinct from what they maintain over the generality of view-hunters, on the mind of the angler. \[30\]

Provided he is also an angler, the second passage's richness of imagery and sensation will doubtless compel the reader to feel the "magic" as surely as does the author:

At this juncture, and just as I was on the point of sketching my soaked and exhausted limbs on the heather, a break in the cloud overhead betokened the bursting forth of the afternoon's sun. A glow of light suddenly pervaded the atmosphere. There was a commotion all round me. The hills became dismantled, as if by magic. From the face of that on which I stood floated in rapid succession masses of vapour. Onwards they swept, surging up from the hollows on every side. I had only to turn and watch their retreat towards the far heights, and again to direct my eyes downwards, to be made fully aware of the change which had taken place. It was like dreamland's self. I stood gazing, all at once, from a heath-clad eminence, up a green sun-lit valley, adown which, in full flood, coursed one of Tay's fairest tributaries. Bosky braes, knolls crested with tall firs, and hung with hazels, birches, and alderwood; ferns, rocks, and pastoral slopes—everything, in fact, which helps in a Highland landscape to enchant the eye, lay before me. The change, I need not say, acted like a spell. \[31\]

The Angler's Companion, first published in 1847, typifies many of the better books on angling in that it smoothly weaves together matters of both a practical and philosophic nature. Matters relating to fish culture raise a special problem. It is clear that during the nineteenth century, interest in fish culture (and related fields such as entomology and ecology) was growing. For all the fact that fish culture is a science, it also has affected anglers' reactions to their gentle craft. For one
thing, it has enabled angler to base their ethics on foundations of fact. Hence Stoddart's concern for how fish are caught is not completely separable from his awareness that fish are not an inexhaustible resource. Similarly, too, Stoddart's ethics partly hinge on his belief that certain fishing techniques can be called unsporting simply because they too easily render the fish victim to his own nature.

Stoddart condemns the "wholesale use" of roe bait because it appears to make fish an altogether too easy prey to the angler. Whether it is because fish respond to the smell or taste of the roe Stoddart is not certain, but he is certain that the bait has an overpowering attraction for fish:

it was evident to me, both from their scarcity at the commencement [of his day's fishing], and the gradual increase of the trout in number as I continued to fish on, that they approached the bait, as it were by a trail, from various quarters further down....

It is clear that in Stoddart's view, the angler is largely identifiable from the fish butcher by the method of angling employed. Stoddart's distaste for the wilfully ignorant or lazy angler fits him directly into the mainstream of the Walton tradition. To Stoddart, the genuine angler is not made out of think and manifold, but out of few and scattered resources. The science of his art is acquired in a rigid and exacting school. He has to reconcile himself to disappointments, to practise self-denial, to encounter hardships. He requires to study devotedly, perseveringly; to neglect or omit nothing.

But all this does not go unrewarded. The diligent shall inherit the delight. And the manner in which Stoddart
makes his point is almost as delightful, almost as sweetly-flowing, as Walton himself:

Angler! that all day long hast wandered by sunny streams, and heart and hand, plied the meditative art, who hast filled thy pannier brimful of star-sided trout, and with aching arms, and weary back, and faint wavering step, crossed the threshold of some cottage inn... 35

The reputation of the third writer of the early period—William Scrope—rests entirely on his single work, the Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing in the River Tweed, first published in 1843. That it is a most remarkable work is undeniable. But precisely what makes it so is less certain. There is no escaping Scrope's respect for both the writings and sentiments of previous authors, or his love of fishing, respect for nature, and curiosity about natural sciences. However, he also goes directly against certain established traditions, and, in some cases, seems unaware of the angler's ethic which deplores the mere hunting down of fish. Perhaps it is safest to say that, in Scrope, there is a fascinating mixture of science and sentiment, vigour and gentleness.

Scrope's style might be a natural outgrowth of his reaction to fishing itself, which he considered to be a blend of excitement and tranquility. 36 His regard for the excitement of the sport recalls Colquhoun, Kingsley, and North, and certain of Scrope's passages seem indelibly marked by the Kingsleyian touch. Like Kingsley, Scrope draws his reader into quiet moods only to shatter the stillness:
...let me wander beside the banks of the tranquil streams of the warm South, 'in yellow meads of asphodel,' when the young spring comes forth, and all nature is glad; or if a wilder mood comes over me, let me clamber among the steeps of the North, beneath the shaggy mountains, where the river comes raging and foaming everlastingly, wedging its way through the secret glen, whilst the eagle, but dimly seen, cleaves the winds and the clouds, and the dun deer gaze from the mosses above. There, amongst gigantic rocks, and the din of mountain torrents, let me do battle with the lusty salmon, till I drag him into day, rejoicing in his bulk, voluminous and vast.

But, alas! we run riot. 37

Scrope's disagreements with the conventions of the angling art are sometimes extremely overt, as when he describes the intricacies of spearing and snagging salmon, 38 methods Scrope clearly did not scruple against:

All this to the Southern ear sounds like poaching of the most flagitious description; but a salmon is a fish of passage, and if you do not get him today he will be gone tomorrow. 39

Sometimes, as when he contradicts the dictum that it is best to fish fine and far off—"remember, it is not good to have a very long line when a short one will answer your purpose," 40—Scrope is merely speaking from the advantaged position of an angler whose tackle permitted him to cast easily to distances that, in Cotton's day, would have been deemed "far off."

No matter what his subject matter, however, Scrope can be relied upon to present his materials in refreshing lights. He is typical in arguing the merits of angling, and in justifying one of the inevitable conclusions of the man-fish encounter. But the case Scrope develops is unique in the extreme. He even convinces the reader that the angler is a Red Cross Knight:
Let us see how the case stands. I take a little wool and feather, and, tying it in a particular manner upon a hook, make an imitation of a fly; then I throw it across the river, and let it sweep round the stream with a lively motion. This I have an undoubted right to do, for the river belongs to me or my friend; but mark what follows. Up starts a monster fish with his murderous jaws, and makes a dash at my little Andromeda. Thus he is the aggressor, not I; his intention is evidently to commit murder.

In a later passage in which Scrope approaches the topic from an altogether quieter and more philosophic stance, his indebtedness to both Sir Humphry Davy and Sir Walter Scott is unmistakeable:

For myself, far from being surprised that distinguished men have delighted in fishing, I only wonder that any man can be illustrious who does not practise either angling or field sports of some sort or another. They all demand skill and enterprise. If you ask me to reconcile angling to reason, you may possibly distress me. It is an instinct, a passion, and a powerful one, originally given to man for the preservation of his existence.

Although man may have an instinct for fishing, he is not born with the natural ability to fish well. Scrope alerts his reader to that piece of information in the opening of his first chapter. And, as is so often the case with Scrope, his method is as important as his matter:

Salmon fishers do not fall from the clouds all perfection at once, but generally acquire some skill in river angling for trout, and such like pigmies, before they aspire to the nobler spoil.

Some folk aspire to the nobler spoil in ways that do not quite fit within the law. Others who know it remain silent—for a number of reasons. Scrope sketches one such circumstance, and his sketch can hardly fail to amuse his reader:
There is a man now, I believe, living at Selkirk, who in times of yore used certain little freedoms with the Tweed Act, which did not become the virtue of his office. As a water bailiff he was sworn to tell of all he saw; and indeed, as he said, it could not be expected that he should tell of what he did not see. When his dinner was served up during close time, his wife usually brought to the table in the first place a platter of potatoes and a napkin; she then bound the latter over his eyes that nothing might offend his sight. This being done, the illegal salmon was brought in smoking hot, and he fell to, blindfolded as he was, like a conscientious water bailiff,—if you know what that is; nor was the napkin taken from his eyes till the fins and bones were removed from the room, and every visible evidence of a salmon having been there had completely vanished: thus he saw no illegal act committed, and went to give in his annual report at Cornhill with his idea of a clear conscience. 44

There are worse ways to say farewell to *Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing* than to quote Scrope's own farewell to the reader, a passage which leaves the reader with the sharp reminder that Scrope knew what it meant to take time to stand and stare:

Farewell, then, dear brothers of the angle; and when you go forth to take your pleasure, either in the mountain stream that struggles and roars through the narrow pass, or in the majestic salmon river that sweeps in lucid mazes through the vale, may your sport be ample, and your hearts light! But should the fish prove more sagacious than yourselves—a circumstance, excuse me, that is by no means impossible; should they, alas—but fate will avert it—reject your hooked gifts, the course of the river will always lead you to pleasant places. In these we leave you to the quiet enjoyment of the glorious works of the Creation, whether it may be your pleasure to go forth when the spring sheds its flowery fragrance, or in the more advanced season, when the sere leaf is shed incessantly and wafted on the surface of the swollen river. 45

Whereas it is difficult to rate one of the early-period writers as being distinctly superior to the other two, no such problem exists when the three writers of the middle period are
A comparative evaluation of Davy, Stoddart, and Scrope is made difficult by their being so totally different. Davy is a careful and serious philosopher; Stoddart is a descriptive and knowledgeable generalist; Scrope is a humorous and devoted specialist. But of the three middle-period authors—Francis, Senior, and Marston—the palm must be given to Francis.

It is true that Senior and Marston have their writing virtues, but they are pikers (no pun intended) when their angling skill and angling knowledge are pitted against Francis. Although all three were prolific writers, and although Marston wrote the greatest number of works, Francis' volume was greater than those of either Marston or Senior. Of the five Francis books considered here, the first-published was Fish Culture.

When Fish Culture became available in 1863, the subject matter on which it focused was already of considerable interest to the public. Francis knew that he was not the first to write on the subject, but he clearly felt that more could and should be said:

...I am induced to put forth this little treatise, not because no works on the subject have been published before, but because there are many points which are extremely interesting in the science, and which, in all probability, will become the most popular part of it, which have been hitherto almost overlooked.

Because the book is, as Francis suggests, highly scientific, much of its subject matter does not qualify for discussion here. What could and should be explored are several of the underlying philosophic tenets. And, interestingly enough, one of Francis' prime motives for promoting fish culture is that man can profit
from such a venture. Had Francis lived in the late twentieth century, he likely would have pointed out that salmon would be worth saving simply as agents for cropping an otherwise almost uncroppable harvest of small sea creatures. As it was, Francis saw that man should first protect, or restore, streams "to their natural state", and then improve them. He bases his argument on the great strides made in agriculture:

"Is water-culture so difficult a study, so recondite in its secrets, so partial and uncertain in its results, that it should not vie, by the means of study and experiment, with agriculture? Surely the results already obtained do not tell us so; much rather do they encourage us to pursue our inquiries, that we may win from Nature her secrets and profit thereby."

And just because Francis focused his attentions on the watery world of game fishes, it should not be concluded that his was a narrow self-interest. He urged a very detailed study—even "chemical and microscopic analysis"—as preparatory to appreciating how dangerous and "wicked" it is to disarrange the works of creation. In Francis' view, anglers, or any others who respected the intricacies of nature, were to be the teachers of "a grand scheme of a new science...in which the food of man is the dependent consideration." Even now, as the lesson is just beginning to be learned, the angler and the naturalist are still the leaders.

The modern reader might be excused if he finds it incredible that the problems of a century ago have yet to be resolved. As Francis identified them, the two basic problems underlying the decline in salmon populations were overharvesting
and pollution. To emphasize the degree of the decline, he reminds his readers that the once-prolific salmon runs were also once a strange source of vexation to the lower classes:

...we hear of its being a common practice of apprentices to have it entered in their indentures, in many places, that they were not to eat salmon more than a certain number of times per week; and it is in the memory of many that servants have rebelled against being fed to a great extent upon salmon.

In A Book on Angling, published in 1867, Francis adopts the appropriately pragmatic pose of the handbook writer. Like Stewart, his handbook purpose is to teach efficiency so that the angler "will lose no time in his fishing, and will be enabled...to fish over a good deal of the ground advantageously." Although A Book on Angling is clearly a handbook, and a very thorough one at that, there are elements within the work that can justifiably be discussed as being both a part of and apart from the how-to-do-it focus.

In continuing the debate that raged between the northern and southern anglers, Francis sides with the southerner largely because the southerner is more apt to be a closer observer of nature. Fish Culture demonstrates Francis' respect for observing the intricacies of nature; A Book on Angling merely illustrates the interest in a very practical mode. The northerner's argument, in capsule, is that the fly-fisher need not bother trying to imitate the natural insects. Francis' rebuttal, in capsule, is that to determine arbitrarily that only a few trout patterns are necessary is downright lazy and highly unconvincing. Francis points out that it is only because the angler's combination of fur
and feather somehow resembles what fish see on the water that fish will take them at all.

This must be conceded; if it be not, why does the fly-fisher adhere to the form, colour, and size of those flies at all? Why have they wings and legs and bodies like flies? Why are they of the same size? Francis abhors the northerner's easy-way-out manner of fishing because it contradicts the idea that "if a thing be worth doing at all it is worth doing well". To fish well, the angler must observe nature. And, because angling is an art of deception no matter what style is employed, the angler "should attend to and imitate nature as closely as possible."

Like so many other angling authors, Francis rates fishing according to the challenges it poses for the angler. Thus, he rates trout fishing as superior to salmon fishing.

There is far greater skill, caution, patience, and cunning required to delude [a trout] than is thought of in the landing of the noblest twenty pound salmon that ever sailed up Tweed or Tay.

But the excitement of salmon fishing is a different matter. Francis would likely agree with Colquhoun that landing a salmon would--for the moment--swallow up any other pleasure that Walton ever derived. The power of the excitement Francis feels is also reminiscent of Wilson and Kingsley:

But the bold rise and the first wild rush of a twenty pound salmon thrills through the frame as nothing else in the nature of the sport does; and I have never known a man who has in him the true essence of a sportsman, and who has for the first time felt and seen the play of a fresh run salmon in his native river, who has not been a salmon-fisher for ever.
There is, throughout *A Book on Angling*, a steady stream of topics with which the reader of angling books soon enough becomes familiar. Fly-fishing is rated the most ethical form of angling; roe is decried; poaching and pollution are denounced. What is less common is for an angling author to write a page-long curse that suits the immoral angler who takes a ripe or spawned-out fish:

...listen to my solemn anathema, and let it lie heavy on thy soul. May your rod top smash at the ferrule, and the brazing stick in tight at the commencement of your 'crack-day-of-the-season,' and may you be unable to beg, borrow, or steal another rod within twenty miles. May you travel hundreds of miles into a strange country, find the river in splendid ply, and then discover that you have left your reel at home....By Jove! I could almost as soon kick an unoffending street-walker, or a lying-in woman, as kill kelts.

Francis' wit and story-telling ability find more fertile ground in *By Lake and River*, a volume that is sometimes instructive, sometimes anecdotal, sometimes digressive, but always entertaining. That the book, first published in 1874, is the work of a highly-informed man is evident on every page. And as Francis comments on fish anatomy (operculums, fin-ray counts, vertebrae), parasites, *et al*, he seasons it all with references to the classics, history, or poetry.

In his "Preface," Francis says that his intention is to tell "what fishing is like," and to tell it "as pleasantly as possible." As has been illustrated above, Francis did not find the lazy or the unreasoned to be pleasant. Thus, his reason for rebuking many writers of the time is not altogether surprising:
"they trust too much to imagination and too little to nature.""61

That Francis heeds external nature needs no further proof. It is more instructive, here, to show that he was also a keen observer of human nature. And he seems to have based his conclusions at least partly on an understanding of himself. In explaining the joy he experienced as a result of out-foxing a trout he was told he would never out-fox, Francis observes that it is a part of human nature,

particularly sportsman-human nature, that love of wiping a friend's eye. I admired that fish twice as much as either of the others [which he had caught earlier], and thought with what exceeding charity I would write to my friend and tell him that I had done it, and how he would recollect that I had said I would do it. Curious beings are sportsmen, particularly fishermen.62

Similarly, in commenting on the all-too-frequent habit of attending popular holiday resorts, Francis warns not to be "humbugged by conventionality into the belief that you have enjoyed yourself when you know you have been miserable and devoured of ennui...."63 His alternative suggestion echoes the often-repeated idea that angling is both a recreation and a re-creation. The angler is advised to seek a quiet retreat where he can fortify himself "against the shocks of business and the agonies of Mrs. Grundy in the future."64

On an angler's holiday, anything can happen, and often does. One of Francis' more amusing tales concerns the adventures of a fishing companion, a Mr. Thompson by name, who having lost his three casts to snags in the river, decided to swim for them. Mr. Thompson was one of the hardier breed who skoffed at rain and
cold wind—and cooler river. Clad only in his skin, he made his
swims, and, to shorten his return trip, walked boldly out to a
field peopled with contented cows. He began to cross the field
to the utter amazement and horror of the cows....
They had never seen such a thing before. What was
this pale ghost that came skimming along the
riverside over the greensward towards them.
Nearer came the spectre, and near yet! they
cannot stand it—a mighty terror seizes them..., and every cow turns tail....65

As with Scrope, it is not so much the matter, but the method that
delights the reader. Francis even has a Scrope fish, though
Francis' specimen is paintly less villainously:

See how quietly the old gentleman comes up,
sucking down an unlucky caterpillar or
blundering beetle that has lost his foothold
on the twig above. How like an usurer in his den the
old scoundrel waits and watches his victims as they
drop into the down stream of discount, until,
hopeless and helpless, they descend into that Avernus,
that limbo of a maw of his.66

Francis' ability to delight the reader likely stemmed, in
large measure, from his delight in living. The role that angling
played cannot be downplayed. In Hot Pot, a collection of angling
reminiscences published in 1880, Francis recalls a favorite
retreat saying,

It is nearly forty years since I fished it,
and yet only last week I fished it over again
in my dreams, and every stone and hole and
favorite bend was as patent and clear before
me as it was the first day I wandered on its banks.67

That brief passage identifies the pervading mood of
Hot Pot. The old ideas are still present, but there is now a more
contemplative tone:
Man dwell so much together in cities, and the crowded noisy companionship is so little for their mental and moral improvement, that the few hours' quiet and rest, or reflection, which the true banker gets when away by himself on Thames or Lea, act like a moral and even physical bath to him.68

Perhaps Francis was reflecting on Davy's *Salmonia* when he said

> Let each [man] take an interest in his own [pursuit], and strive to work it so that it may produce the greatest real benefit to the greatest number.69

In any event, *Hot Pot* is sensually reflective. Its sights, sounds, and smells identify it from Francis' earlier writings. Only an insensitive reader could refuse the invitation to linger with the author along the riverbend, where the reeds and sedges whisper their secrets to each other. Occasionally an alder or an old pollard stoops over the bank, beneath which the stream sparkles and eddies a long in the sunlight, over swaying water weeds of a hundred strange and beautiful patterns, broken now and again with patches of silvery gravel. The scent of distant upland hay, with nearer May-bush and honeysuckle, mingled with crushed watercelery and wild horsemint, fills the nostrils with delicious natural perfume. The lark roams higher and higher and higher yet, till it is lost in the sky, though its voice still peals downwards in a constant ripple of melody; the blackbird whistles in every little grove or plantation; the sedgewarbler twitters and chirrups its low, sweet song; and, blending with all, the reeds and river rustle and gurgle in chords of harmony.70

Francis' story-telling is as able as ever, but, now, there is an unmistakable, even unguarded serenity in his sketches. Even the passages of high victory are toned down. The following vignette is typical:

"That's a big chap, your honour," says William Tipper, deferentially, and pointing to the stump of an old split-up pollard on the opposite bank, where a fish is taking every
fly that passes, and with as little disturbance in the water as though he were but a wee sprattie of half an ounce. The line is swept to and fro a few times to dry and straighten it, and, as a gentle summer breeze softly ruffles the surface, away goes the deceitful imitation, and lights like thistledown, or like the real fly, some two feet above the victim. Gracefully it sails down to him on the surface, with two other real flies in company. "Now it is over him, sir! and there he rises!" "Beautifully struck, sir!" and away rushes the "wee sprattie," jumping out of the water with two mad leaps, and displaying the golden, crimson-spotted sides of a noble four-pounder, who, after trying all his strength and artifice to escape in vain, is at last led gently into the landing-net upon a shelving ledge of chalk some twenty yards down stream. "And to think of his pickin' out your artificial from between the two naturals!" says William Tipper, blowing out and drying the fly. "I never see such a thing; well, they are beauties, surely, and as like as natur! Them wings, sir, when you hold 'em up to the light, is the very colour to a moral."71

Francis' last work, Angling Reminiscences, was published posthumously, in 1887. Although some of the chapters—notably the one on barbel fishing—are strictly handbook matter, the overall amount of instructional matter is slight, and seldom intrusive. Reminiscences reflects Hot Pot in both form and temper; it is a collection of anecdotes and short tales, and its wit and general good humour are somehow secondary to its reflective mood. Digressions, or interruptions, are slightly more noticeable in Reminiscences. Sometimes several side-trips or reflections occur within the framework of a single anecdote. In freely following the tangential paths of associated thoughts, Francis gives various of his anecdotes a sort of dilute stream-of-consciousness.

Over and over again the reader is struck by the fact that the anecdotes are statements of powerful emotions recollected
in tranquility. In describing one of his salmon encounters, Francis reminds the reader of several earlier writers. The reel's delicious music recalls Stoddart, and the overall vigour and excitement recall Colquhoun, Wilson, and Kingsley. But there is, too, the stamp of Francis:

Then he took a violent rush down stream on the further side of the eddy, and once more the reel discoursed delicious music. "Ye'll hae him full surely," said Jock, "for it's a fine deep watter, and there's nae obstructions." For several minutes the fine fellow made frantic rushes up and down, but as I wound him in after each they grew shorter and shorter, and I felt I was becoming rapidly his master. My excitement was aesthetic, intense. To all languid, passive natures, if you want to feel too, too utterly utter, I say, hook your first salmon, and if you want to penetrate the depths of despair, lose him. Then for an hour we sat down and gazed at the beauty in varied postures and settings, and he was lovely and unrivalled in all. One may in after years retain but a hazy recollection of his first sweetheart. There is a doubt possibly whether the hair was golden or dark, whether the eyes were blue or black, but one never forgets one's "first salmon." It is as impossible to forget Francis as it is to forget one's first salmon, or the particularly game fish that leaves its indelible mark on the memory. There exists, between a genuine angler and his fish, a mysterious communication. When a fish is particularly sluggish, the angler might experience a feeling that borders on contempt. When a fish is particularly determined, the angler feels what Francis felt:

I could not have supposed, after the awful mauling I had given him, that he had another start left in him; but he had. It was his last, however; the gallant fish at the end of it turned slowly on his side, and I led him gently in to doom. But, like a thoroughly plucky and game fish, he would resist to the death, even if it was
only to give a last faint shake of the head, which he did as he came in. That shake won him the victory, for the sorely-tried hold came away, and one of the most plucky fish I ever handled won his freedom, fairly and nobly. I don't grudge it him now, for determination should win, and a more determined fish I never hooked...

Despite being far less the all-round angler-writer than Francis, William Senior—the second-published author of the middle period—is worthy of the reader's attention, though not so deserving of detailed investigation. Senior's strength lies, not in fishing hints or philosophical commentaries, but in descriptions and historical and biographical gleanings. In By Stream and Sea (1877), he includes information on Davy and Kingsley; in Lines in Pleasant Places (1920), he includes a vital chapter on his friend and angling companion, Halford; in Travel and Trout in the Antipodes (1879), he includes an interesting account of the transplantation of trout from the British Isles to Australia and New Zealand.

Senior's descriptive powers are evident in each of his works. His feeling for nature, angling, and for life is often etched with a precision that inexorably impells the reader to be a participant in a recollected experience:

A sharp frost hardened up the country during the night—and the sun rose boldly into a cloudless sky without any shilly-shally before nine o'clock. It was along iron-bound roads, with the melttings of yesterday converted to ice, that I drove to my allotted beat. There was a wonderful change from yesterday; the golden plover on the flats were not briskly moving on the moistening turf as before, though flocks of woodpigeons were astir. The pure snow, which remained on the low land, was crisp and sparkling, diamonding a fair white world. The river had fallen, of course, since
the snow of yesterday had made no difference. The evidence was plain enough. You read it in the green margin glistening against the snow line sinuously left along the banks. Tay looked beautifully black, moreover, and the boatman said "They ought to come." 

The collection of angling essays in Near and Far (1888) is Senior at his best. If not the finest, then certainly one of the finest, chapters is entitled "The Mill Pool." Typically, for Senior, the style is unhurried. The reader is slowly led into the fishing matter. Senior approaches his topic this way:

There are some people, I believe who find their highest enjoyment in an invitation to dinner. In this life a banquet of numerous courses is their crowning delight, and I suspect that if they knew that in the world to come there was no dining and giving of dinners they would go through the remainder of their lives as men absolutely without hope. 

To Senior, a pre-fishing-journey breakfast is a far more satisfactory invitation because it is also an invitation to fish. Significantly, Senior describes the interior of the "modest diggings" where the breakfast occurs, but he does not dwell on the breakfast itself. The journey is a worthier subject:

The joyousness of our little trip was increased by the crisp air of the September morning. The gossamer webs of the spider were suspended in glistening threads from hedge to hedge, clear evidence that we were the first travellers who had passed that way since yesternight.

Then follows the fishing adventure itself, and finally, the pleasant evening with pleasant company, and the return journey:

...towards dusk the gallant chestnut pony was spinning across the marshes, while landrails and other birds were calling sometimes close to us, and again in the distance in the gathering mist.
In a chapter headed "My Saturday Out," a brief description of stream-bank foliage—complete with sounds that suit the sense—reminds the reader of a remarkably close parallel in Francis (quoted above under the discussion of *Hot Pot*):

> There was a thicket of reed-mace at the lower end [of an islet] that for lustiness of growth you shall not equal. Its dark green swords cluster close, and it is always in motion, rustling softly in summer; and in winter, when it becomes straw colored, and a collection of tall, dry spears, with tasselled heads, it rattles weirdly.78

Though Travel and Trout is really an illegitimate inclusion here—being about non-British happenstances—it is nevertheless impossible to leave Senior without recalling an apocrophal, page-long story about a one-eyed trout that appears in that volume. Here is the story:

> There was a famous one-eyed trout, enjoying a reputation amongst all the Christchurch anglers, which just previous to my arrival had met with a most ignominious fate. His demise was a subject of general lament. By fair means and foul he had been angled for from his youth upwards, until he reached the weight of seven pounds, and was grisly about the occiput and shoulders, which was tantamount in his line of life to being grey-headed. Veteran sportsmen who had struggled with the mighty salmon in Loch Tay and slain him, accomplished fly-fishers who could achieve the thistledown trick and circumvent the timid trout when their comrades never moved a fish, acknowledged that he was their master. Theroists thought about him night and day in vain. Young men regardless of expense, wrote home for costly tackle and the latest improvements. Unprincipled fellows tried to take a mean advantage of his physical infirmity, and literally to get on his blind side. Wives and mothers were kept in perpetual anxiety because their loved ones exposed themselves to the midnight air, and returned depressed and haggard at daylight. It was even said that two friends, the Jonathan and David of the day, had become mortal foes on account of this obstinate brown trout, and
that a young lady, catching the prevailing enthusiasm, would accept no offer save from the man who could wage victorious conflict with him. The story as thus told me by a very humorous Christchurch man was exciting and touching: And one day a cry was heard. Workmen dropped their tools and hurried to the bridge; agitated emissaries were met hastening to the town. A wretched, ragged boy, with a couple of yards of coarse twine, a great rusty hook, a bean stick, and a dirty piece of beef, had approached the popular object in the one unguarded moment of a long and honourable life, and had, with demoniacal whoop, hauled him bodily to bank.79

That the third writer of the middle period was a gentleman, scholar, and true Waltonian cannot be doubted. What can be questioned is whether he deserves to be included among the "principal writers" of nineteenth century angling literature. His works give the impression of having been written by an author who happened to be an angler, rather than having been written by an angler. Nor did Marston claim to be an accomplished angler. That much is suggested by the title of his first-published work, An Amateur Angler's Day in Dove Dale. From that date—1884—forward, Marston wrote under the adopted name of "The Amateur Angler." His obvious lack of angling talent is best explained by Marston himself: "I have been a business man for nearly fifty years, alas..., and during all that time nature and I have been for the most part strangers to each other...."80

In his "Preface" to Days in Clover (1892), Marston issues a warning to the reader that could apply equally well to his other volumes. Days in Clover, he says, is mainly a collection of "letters" previously published in the Fishing Gazette, and pretends to be nothing more than a "booklet." He goes on to say that those seeking
"solid information" on angling should seek elsewhere than in his 120-page-long treatise. It could also be said of Marston's works that they are rambling and travel-guidish. Marston's myriad of topics include discussion of his family, castles, abbies, ruins of many types, scenery, and natural history. He concludes his Easy-Chair Memories (1911) by reporting a conversation that occurred between Napoleon and a first-hand observer. Marston's general approach can be gleaned from The Globe's abbreviated review of Fresh Woods and Pastures New (1887) which appeared, prior to the titlepage, under the heading "Extracts from Reviews:"

"Fresh Woods and Pastures New" has more variety of interest and a greater charm of style than either of its predecessors. [An Amateur Angler's Days in Dove Dale and Frank's Ranch; or, My Holiday in the Rockies] Of the fifteen letters of which the book is composed, the first five describe a week at a farmhouse, and we read not only of fly-fishing in the Teme and the Lugg, but of a swing in a barn, of wood-chopping and thistle-mowing, of plovers and plovers' eggs, of owls, of turkeys, of peacocks, and the like...and so the writer goes on--ever in love with all that is charming in nature, and not unmindful of all that is best in man. It is notable, too, that though he does not discourse directly of books, he everywhere shows evidence of literary taste and knowledge.

Though he did not discourse on books in Fresh Woods, Marston certainly did in several of his other works. And those discussions--Marston dislike referring to himself as a reviewer--are largely the reason for Marston being included here. The serious student of angling literature will find Marston a worthwhile guide. In Days of Clover, Marston devotes one chapter to Andrew Lang's Angling Sketches; in Easy-Chair Memories (1911), he praises
Christopher North; and throughout much of his other writings, he writes brief sketches, too numerous to list, on a host of famous angler-writers from Walton to Senior.

On the basis of their worth as angling literature, Marston's pre-1900 works clearly outshadow his post-1900 writings. Among the titles that first appeared after 1900, are *Easy-Chair Memories*—mentioned above—*An Old Man's Holiday* (1900), *Dove Dale Révisited* (1902), and *Fishing for Pleasure* (1906). Marston's love of angling may have been seriously interrupted by business for nearly fifty years, but his genuine love of the gentle art and of nature are never concealed from the reader. For those not offended by his rambling style, *An Amateur Angler's Days in Dove Dale*, *By Meadow and Stream* (1896), and *On a Sunshine Holyday* (1897) make pleasant reading.

In *Dove Dale*, Marston recognizes the value of angling as an escape, and looks back regretfully on his many years away from nature. He even cautions the young not to make the mistake he did. In *By Meadow and Stream*, he repeats his fondnesses and regrets, gives a sketch of his early fishing days (and tackle—which, incidentally, echoes Wilson's description), and quotes an American writer as having made the comment that, after eating Shad, "you should strip off all your clothing and rub yourself down with sandpaper to remove any of the bones projecting through the skin," a comment worthy of Kingsley. He also improves Tennyson somewhat: "'Tis better to have hooked and lost / Than never to have hooked at all." In *On a Sunshine*
Holyday, Marston writes an excellent "discussion" on Walton, and suffers the embarrassment of hooking himself in the nose.

Three titles—Dry-Fly Fishing in Theory and Practice (1889), Dry-Fly Entomology (1897), and Modern Development of the Dry-Fly (1910)—are sufficient to suggest that F.M. Halford, the late period's first-published author of angling books, was indeed an elitist. Further evidence is easily garnered from within the texts themselves. In *An Angler's Autobiography* (1903), Halford says

At the age of twenty-four my introduction to the Wandle [River] first brought prominently to my mind the art of fishing the dry-fly. At the outset it fascinated me, and since those days I have never for a moment wavered in the opinion that it is the highest conceivable form of sport.  

And, in *Dry-Fly Fishing*, the "purists" are identified as the dry-fly fishermen who will not under any circumstances cast except over rising fish, and prefer to remain idle the entire day rather than attempt to persuade the wary inhabitants of the stream to rise at an artificial fly, unless they have previously seen a natural one taken in the same position.

Despite all this, and despite the fact that much of his writing is, in fact, handbook-oriented, it would be wrongheaded in the extreme to deny that Halford is one of the nineteenth century's "principal writers" of angling books.

In a very important sense, Halford was no more the elitist than was Scrope. Halford preferred chalk stream dry-fly fishing, but occasionally wet-fly fished for salmon. Scrope preferred wet-fly fishing for salmon, but occasionally dry-fly fished for
chalk stream trout. It was not so much that Halford scrupled against the wet fly, then, but that he was against wet flies being used on fish that would respond to the dry fly. He recognized that the various branches of the angling art each possessed their particular ethics, and required particular skills. The ethical angler simply fished in the manner which demanded the most skill. Halford's dislike of nymph-fishing techniques partly stemmed from the fact that the method caused many trout to be foul-hooked:

It has been darkly rumoured that some anglers are invariably able to get good sport among bulging fish, and that the plan adopted is to cast up-stream with a good-sized sunk fly put directly above. The slightest movement of the trout is answered by a quick and somewhat violent strike, the effect of this action being to drive the hook into some part of the moving fish, but probably not into its mouth. I am inclined to doubt the possibility of accomplishing this with a single hook, although it has been vouched for by fishermen of ripe experience and unimpeachable veracity. Be this as it may, there are no words strong enough to express the contempt which a true sportsman should feel for a pot-hunter who would descend to such strategy.87

It is clear, too, that for Halford, ethics must be based on facts. That is why he argues against the "encore plus royalistes" claim that Mayfly fishing is poaching. Halford says that it is probably not only the most difficult but also the least productive dry-fly fishing method:88

Halford's respect for facts is manifest in several other important instances. Although he obviously had high regard for both Francis and Ronalds, he had even more regard for accuracy. He accepted nothing; he experimented for himself. In doing so,
he uncovered several entomological errors made by Francis and Ronalds. He wondered how Ronalds and Francis made some of their mistakes, but he condemned outright those writers who simply copied statements without bothering to verify anything for themselves. 89

Nor is Halford afraid to confront time-honored beliefs. In *Dry-Fly Entomology*, he dispells the idea that insects which fall from stream-bank trees constitute a significant portion of a trout's diet by saying that not one example of these three windfalls has been found in the hundreds of autopsies which [he] made, and all the caterpillars and spiders that fall from the trees in a mile of water would not suffice to feed a single pound trout for a single day. 90

That Halford considers it essential to fish with both the hands and the head is apparent in each of his works. And Halford gives illustrations of the practical value of thinking and observing. In addition to experiencing delight in turning out a fly which is a "truer and better imitation of nature than the generality of those he has seen before...," the fly-tier will

fish this improved pattern with a fuller sense of confidence in its efficacy than he would with an inferior imitation, and, as has been so often written before, confidence in a particular fly is one of the most potent factors tending to render it successful in use. 91

Similarly, the angler who closely observes the most carefully cast winged pattern will note that it does not land on the water like "the proverbial thistledown." Rather, he "will be disgusted at the force with which it falls, and the disturbance it makes
on the surface." On the other hand, should the angler tie and
test a wingless hackle pattern, he will find that its landing
on the water "will not scare the fish, but very possibly rise
and kill it." It is worth observing how difficult it would be to
correlate a charge of elitism to Halford's willingness to share
his knowledge, a willingness that is stated in the opening chapter
of Dry-Fly Entomology and in the closing chapter of Modern
Development of the Dry-Fly. "The main object" of the former

is to give the rudimentary knowledge required
to enable an enquiring Angler to recognise such
insects as are at once plentiful on the water,
and serve as food for trout and grayling.

Halford even went so far as to use "the simplest language,
avoiding, as far as possible, scientific terms which are not
always easily understood." Halford's sincere good naturedness
shines through his conclusion to Modern Development:

Fishermen as a class are accused of being far
too selfish in the pursuit of their sport, and
perhaps we deserve this reproach in many cases.
It is not much of a point in our favour to urge
that to the majority of our fellowmen—whether fishermen
or not—the same charge might be applied with equal
justice. Let us, however, one and all show some
consideration for the future sport of our brother
anglers.... I can honestly say that any experience
 gained throughout a long apprenticeship has been
freely given to the comparatively small section
of the public which reads my books, and nothing that
I have thought could be of advantage to the angling
fraternity has ever been kept back.

Although it would be difficult to imagine any serious
tROUT or salmon fisherman not delighting in the richness of Halford's
knowledge and reasoning on a wide range of topics, it is nevertheless
possible. Any who would be numbered in that category would likely
be best advised to read only *Dry-Fly Fishing* and *An Angler's Autobiography*, the two works which contain the most non-scientific matter.

The following brief example from *Dry-Fly Fishing* is typical of Halford in that it contains a lesson: the rewards of angling often go to the observant and self-controlled angler:

In a stagnant bay of a small side stream a quiet rise had been seen. Across the neck of this bay a plank was extended to serve as a bridge when walking up the stream. Without a moment's hesitation, Mr. Marryat [close friend and collaborator to Halford] cast his spent gnat over the plank into this little bay, and waited for some minutes, when his patience was rewarded by a bold rise....Not one in a hundred anglers would have waited so long for the rise, and the smallest movement of the rod would have produced a drag on the fly, and infallibly scared this wary old stager.97

The following passage, typical for *An Angler's Autobiography*, demonstrates the factual focus of Halford's narrative technique:

I went down occasionally during the month of May, and on the 20th, just in the gloaming, saw a good fish rise in the stream flowing from the culvert. I had been changing flies pretty frequently that afternoon, as the trout seemed very shy, and had a small Coachman on the cast at the moment. Judging the length of the line with extra care, I managed to cover the spot, and rose and hooked the fish. I scrambled on to the bridge and had a long tussle with the fish, eventually netting it, and as it was then nearly dark, walked down to the Inn to get a mouthful of food before starting on my homeward journey.

Another fisherman, regaling himself at the Inn, enquired as to my sport, and was very surprised when he saw the trout I had just killed. I had estimated its weight at about 2 1/4 lbs., but he laughed at me, and offered to bet that it would pull down the scales at 3 lbs. Sending for scales and weights, we were both astonished at finding that it weighed 3 lbs. 2 ozs. It was a typical Wandle fish of that period, 15 ins. in length and 15 1/2 ins. girth--one of those short thick, hog-backed
looking female trout with tiny head, which are very rarely seen now-a-days.98

The following paragraph from the same book is not typical. It is about salmon fishing. Halford does not imitate Scrope and others by going into raptures about subduing a salmon. Nevertheless, his reportorial style does not conceal his excitement:

Presently the gillie was crouching down in the water, gaff in hand, and after two or three attempts I managed to bring the salmon within his reach. Calmly, and without hurry he drove the gaff home and staggered up the bank with the assistance of "Red Spinner" [pseudonym for William Senior, one of Halford's close friends and fishing companions], with a huge male fish, which was deposited on the ground while we all had to rest and get a mouthful of whiskey to recuperate. I never felt so tiring in my life, adripping from perspiration from head to foot, my legs shaking so that I could scarcely stand, and both arms aching with pain.99

It would be difficult to become tired of reading Halford's autobiography. He might be factual, but he is never dull; he might not be descriptive, but he is always active.

He concludes by quoting a passage from Walton, a passage which also brings to mind the same sentiment expressed in different words by several authors of angling books:

I can sum up my conclusions as to the commendation of angling in the words of Izaak Walton, in the first chapter of his "complete Angler," where in the colloquy between Venator, Auceps, and Piscator, the last-named says: "The question is rather whether you be capable of learning it? for angling is somewhat like poetry—men are to be born so; I mean with inclinations to it, though both may be heightened by discourse and practice; but he that hopes to be a good angler must not only bring an inquiring, searching, observing wit, but he must bring a large measure of hope and patience, and a love and propensity to the art itself, but having once got
and practised it, then doubt not but angling will prove to be so pleasant that it will prove to be, like virtue, a reward to itself."100

The second writer of the late period, Andrew Lang, agrees with Halford and Walton that the angler, like the poet, "'must be born so.'"101 And Lang's explanation for believing himself to be born an angler is undeniably similar to Davy's:

Well, it is stronger than myself, the love of fishing; perhaps it is an inherited instinct, without the inherited power. I may have had a fishing ancestor who bequeathed to me the passion without the art.102

Although Lang is an observant, philosophic angler, the tone of his single but important contribution to the angling literature of the nineteenth century—*Angling Sketches*, first published in 1891—is far lighter than either Halford or Davy. It could also be added that Lang is less knowledgeable than Halford, and less philosophic than Davy. His compensating virtue, should he need one, is that he is more humorous than both. In this last particular, Lang reminds of both Francis and Scrope—perhaps more of Scrope than of Francis—the other two fishing wits to be numbered among the "principal writers" of angling books.

The attentive reader will remember that Halford forever "manages." He manages to make a particular cast; he manages to get a wary trout to rise; he manages to net his prize. Lang is not quietly modest. His overstatement of clumsiness is guaranteed to remind the reader of some of his own acts of clumsiness. Lang's statement—reminder comes in a most palatable form:
Nature, that made me enthusiastically fond of fishing, gave me thumbs for fingers, short-sighted eyes, indolence, carlessness, and a temper which (usually sweet and angelic) is goaded to madness by the laws of matter and of gravitation. For example: when another man is caught up in a branch he disengages his fly; I jerk at it till something breaks. As for carelessness, in boyhood I fished, by preference, with doubtful gut and knots ill-tied; it made the risk greater, and increased the excitement if one did hook a trout....On the Test I thought it seemly to carry a landing-net. It had a hinge, and doubled up. I put the handle through a button hole of my coat: I saw a big fish rising, I put a dry fly over him; the idiot took it. Up stream he ran, then down stream, then he yielded to the rod and came near me. I tried to unship my landing-net from my buttonhole. Vain labour! I twisted and turned the handle, it would not budge. Finally, I stooped, and attempted to ladle the trout out with the short net; but he broke the gut, and went off. A landing-net is a tedious thing to carry, so is a creel, and a creel is, to me, a superfluous. There is never anything to put in it. If I do catch a trout, I lay him under a big stone, cover him with leaves, and never find him again.103

Lang, too, has a Scrope fish. But Lang deals with his fish in a manner very different from that described by Scrope or Francis:

...near shore there was just one trout who never stopped gorging all day. He lived exactly opposite the nick in the distant hills, and exactly a yard farther out than I could throw a fly. He was a big one, and I am inclined to think that he was the Devil. For, if I had stepped in deeper, and the water had come over my wading boots, the odds are that my frail days on earth would have been ended by a chill, and I knew this, and yet the fish went on tempting me to my ruin. I suppose I tried to reach him a dozen times, and cast a hundred, but it was to no avail. At length, as the afternoon grew grey and chill, I pitched a rock at him, by way of showing that I saw through his fiendish guile, and I walked away.104
The reader is regaled with tales of missed fish, broken rods, and "hideous insects," (which Lang cannot identify or imitate but which the trout dearly love). In his descriptive passages, Lang often reverses the Scrope-Kingsley method by starting off on a lightly frivolous tone, and then gradually developing a more quietly contemplative voice. Lang's comments to the contrary notwithstanding, the reader never doubts that the author's love of nature has been long and deep:

Now Nature is all very well. I have nothing to say against her of a Sunday, or when trout are not rising. But she was no comfort to me now. Smiling she gazed on my discomfiture [his inability to tempt some actively-feeding trout]. The lovely lines of the hills, curving about the loch, and with their deepest dip just opposite where I sat, were all of a golden autumn brown, except in the violet distance. The grass of Parnassus grew thick and white around me, with its moonlight tint of green in the veins. On a hillside by a brook the countryfolk were winning their hay, and their voices reached me softly from far off. On the loch the marsh-fowl flashed and dipped, the wild ducks played and dived and rose...

Although he does not say as much, Lang would likely agree that the love of nature, as the love of angling, is born into man. In a calm reflection, he recalls his boyhood loves:

Memory, that has lost so much and would gladly lose so much more, brings vividly back the golden summer evenings by Tweedside, when the trout began to splash in the stillness—brings back the long, lounging, solitary days beneath the woods of Ashiesteil—days so lonely that they sometimes, in the end, begat a superstitious eeriness.
The role of nature in making the child the father of the man recalls Wordsworth, and the role of memory in reminding of the virtue of innocence recalls many angling authors. And, like so many of the nineteenth century's angling authors—particularly those of the last half of the century—Lang is saddened by the deterioration in fishing. As a boy, Lang fished the same south Scotland rivers as Stoddart had fished. During Lang's boyhood, the rivers were experiencing the very abuses Stoddart had feared. Like all authors of angling books, Lang would like the impossible—a return to Eden, a return to a world in which external nature has not yet been defiled:

"In times before the hills were drained, before the manufacturing towns were so populous, before pollution, netting, dynamiting, poisoning, sniggling, and the enormous increase of fair and unfair fishing, the border must have been the angler's paradise."

From his awareness of the past and his present, Lang can only forecast a bleak future: "Man in the future will enjoy bricks, asphalte, fog, machinery, 'society,' even picture galleries, as many men and most women do already." His prophecy, of course, has come true. It is probably also true that matters will get a great deal worse before they get better—if they ever will improve. Nevertheless, so long as there is even a prospect in fishing, man could do worse than to heed Lang's recommendation to follow the older spirit, to follow the footsteps of Izaak Walton even if they lead to "streams less clear" and "meadows less fragrant" than they once were."
Grey hairs come, and stiff limbs, and shortened sight; but the spring is green and hope is fresh for all the changes in the world and in ourselves. We can tell a hawk from a hand-saw, a March Brown from a Blue Dun; and if our success be as poor as ever, our fancy can dream as well as ever of better things and more fortunate chances. For fishing is like life; and in the art of living, too, there are duffers, though they seldom give us their confessions. Yet even they are kept alive, like the incompetent angler, by this undying hope: they will be more careful, more skilful, more lucky next time. The gleaming untravelled future, the bright untried waters, allure us from day to day, from pool to pool, till, like the veteran on Coquet side, we "try a farewell throw," or, like Stoddart, look our last on Tweed.

The last of the late period's writers, Edward Grey (Viscount Grey of Fallodon), made three magnificently fine throws into the pool of angling literature. His first—*Fly Fishing*, published in 1899—was the farthest-reaching. His second—an essay entitled "Fly-Fishing"—was written specifically for inclusion in *Fallodon Papers* (1926), which was otherwise a collection of already-published, non-angling papers. His third—two new chapters for the previously-published *Fly Fishing*—appeared in a new edition of the book published in 1930. By the time he wrote the last two, Grey's eyesight, which had been failing for years, was so deteriorated that he could no longer see the bright waters onto which he cast. Shortly after the war, his vision had become so weakened that he could only see his fishing rod; no more could he see either the "draw of the stream" on his line, or even a hint of the line. Despite the physical handicap, Grey's inward vision remained as sharp as ever.
Grey's insights into the attractions and the art of fishing are expressed clearly and calmly in the Fallodon Paper's chapter on fly fishing. Grey's belief that fly-fishing is the acme of the angling art is quickly evident. But he does not find it necessary to subdivide fly-fishing into categories of excellence:

> It is ungracious and futile to compare the merits of the different forms of fly-fishing: salmon fishing, wet-fly and dry-fly fishing for trout. Each if it be good of its kind, has special charms and satisfaction of its own.\textsuperscript{113}

Not the least of his reasons for calling fly-fishing "the very crown and consummation of the pleasure of angling" is that there is a sense of high art in inducing fish to take for food something which is composed of feathers and materials that have, taken separately in themselves, no resemblance to any edible thing whatever.\textsuperscript{114}

In addition, the casting alone requires continued skill and effort; the fly-fisherman is always doing something; and, sometimes in salmon fishing, and usually in trout fishing, "there is the pleasure of seeing the rise, the motion of the fish as it takes the fly on or just under the surface of the water."\textsuperscript{115} It is not insignificant that Grey made the last-mentioned observation long after he was no longer able to see the rise.

Elsewhere, Grey echoes writers from Walton forward on the subject of anglers being born, then perfected:

> Fly-fishing is but one form of angling, and to enjoy it to the full a man must be born an angler. The passion may be latent, for years it may not discover itself owing to lack of opportunity, but if it is not revealed when opportunity comes, it is not there.\textsuperscript{116}
One of the major discoveries that the angler makes is that there is delight to be had in external nature. And, in Grey's descriptive passages, there is the inescapable flavor of Walton:

...the fresh light air is like a caress, the warm sun shines interrupted only by the occasional passage of small white clouds, the water meadows are bright with buttercups, and the woods and hedges that are on their borders are white with hawthorn blossom or lit by the candelabra of horse-chestnut flower. Birds of many sorts, most notably blackbirds, are singing, and the angler in his hour of waiting has such entertainment as seems more than imperfect man can deserve or comprehend.117

Grey knew that, just as some people will never understand the pleasures of poetry, others will never understand the pleasures of angling. But, the fact that others do not comprehend a pleasure does not render the pleasure any the less real, or powerful. The pleasure of angling, he says,

is too subtle in some of its forms to be analyzed; too intimate to be explained....The gift of the power to enjoy has various forms and diverse objects. There is no need for those who have one form of this gift to look askance at those who have another. But surely as life draws to a close no one can look back on days of recreation with more certain gratitude than he who has had the opportunity of fly-fishing and has been born with the gift of enjoying angling.118

In Fly Fishing, there is no escaping the fact that Grey is primarily concerned with the pleasures of angling. Books about angling, he says, should

be written and read, partly perhaps for the sake of hints, information, and instruction, but much more in the hope that the sense of refreshing pleasure, which has been felt by the writer, may slide into a sympathetic mind.119
And, further:

...most of us endeavour to divide our lives into three parts, work, rest, and recreation; and it is with the management of the third part, and the place of angling with regard to it, that this book is concerned.120

What pleases Grey about both angling and angling literature helps identify the nature of the angler, and explain why the fraternity of anglers is such a strong brotherhood. Grey, like so many other anglers, enjoys Walton for his pastoral calm:

...the charm of Walton's Complete Angler is at any rate partly due to the simplicity and purity of nature, which find expression in his book. There is a quiet and benign light in his writing, which draws us to it, and makes us choose to linger over it.121

But calmness is not the only sensation that suits angling. The gentle art, paradoxically, also admits passion. Like so many of those who have written about salmon fishing, the experience of playing and landing a fresh-run fish left Grey weak from excitement:

The salmon weighed eight pounds ten ounces, and it had taken perhaps half an hour to land it. There was no physical reason for being exhausted, and yet for a little time I could do nothing. All power had gone from me; my limbs were trembling, and there was a looseness of the knees which made it difficult to walk. Such are the great times of sheer excitement which happen in fishing.122

Like others, too, the landing of a salmon gave Grey the feeling of triumph.123

That some anglers derive greater pleasure—or a wider range of pleasure—from the pursuit is natural enough. Grey suggests that part of the reason is to be found in the different
stages of angling maturity that the individual has attained. The first stage is the desire for success, and the excitement that comes with success; the second stage is the desire for skill, which tends to make the angler competitive; and the final stage is to care more for the skill itself than for the success that skill brings. Grey also identifies the angler's three main qualities: physical cleverness, suggestive mind, and self-control. To Grey, self-control means far more than the patience that so many believe to be the angler's primary requirement. The relationship between the stages of maturity and the qualities of the angler are self-evident.

It is, of course, the highly-skilled and self-controlled angler who is most likely to concern himself with philosophical matters. And so it is that Grey searches his thoughts and feelings to discover precisely what it at the center of the sensation of glory that accompanies the landing of a salmon. His conclusion likely applies to all fishing: "the supreme moment is undoubtedly the actual hooking of the fish."

As the angler grows in maturity, his ethical standards must also become refined. The beginning angler, still struggling for success, might be incapable of understanding the validity of Grey's condemnation of wet-fly fishing at night:

Night fishing with a large wet fly should not be allowed on good dry fly water. It is poor fun to haul out of the river by main force in the dark, on thick gut, a trout that might give good sport in daylight.

In the early stages, the angler's desire for success blinds him to the full possibilities of pleasure. He might even fish for trout
with roe simply because he equates pleasure with profit. As he matures, he learns that roe-fishing requires relatively little skill. When his self image demands that he exhibit more skill, he takes up fly-fishing. As his self-confidence grows, his mind seeks new challenges. He begins to observe nature more closely and, finally, when fishing a dry-fly for trout, he will try to make his imitation "float as if it were buoyant, cheerful, and in the best of spirits—natural flies having the appearance of being very frivolous and light-hearted."\[128\]

The angler is mature when he has overcome his need to prove his skill, when he has overcome his need to exact a payment from external nature. He can then experience angling as a vehicle for experiencing something beyond physical or concrete gratification. It is unlikely that Grey's sensations would be experienced by any but the reflective angler, the complete Waltonian:

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Often after walking a mile or two on the way to the river, at a brisk pace, there comes upon one a feeling of "fitness," of being made of nothing but health and strength so perfect, that life need have no other end but to enjoy them. It is as though now for the first time the whole lungs were filled with air. The pure act of breathing at such times seems glorious. People talk of being a child of nature, and moments such as these are the times when it is possible to feel so; to know the full joy of animal life—to desire nothing beyond. There are times when I have stood still for joy of it all, on my way through the wild freedom of a Highland moor, and felt the wind, and looked upon the mountains and water and light and sky, till I felt conscious only of the strength of a mighty current of life, which swept away all consciousness of self, and made me a part of all that I beheld.\[129\]
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Perhaps Grey's message is this: when man truly observes nature, he becomes part of that which he observes, and when he becomes a part of, instead of apart from, nature, he will have risen above the common fears and complaints of man. Perhaps the result is peace of mind. In any event, it is certainly true that Grey's writing exhibits a strong current of tranquility. It is worth repeating, here, a passage in which Grey describes how his awareness of nature triggers serious contemplation:

When fishing is not productive it is pleasant to be in the warm April sun at the edge of the trees on the top of a high bank on the left-hand side of the river, and to look down upon this pool [the Falls Pool on the Cassley River]; for it is a fine, fascinating, and beautiful place. Poets under such benign influences of Nature are moved to soothing thoughts of how life may end. . . . Most peaceful of all is Wordsworth's description of the actual close of the life of an old clergyman in the Lake country. He was still able-bodied and hale, though in extreme old age, when—

Like a shadow thrown
Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,
Death fell upon him, as reclined he lay
For noontide solace on the summer grass,
The warm lap of his mother earth.

So to one whose work was done and whose strength had failed might the end come fitly and happily while he lay listening to the sound of the falling water, his last sight of the splendid pool with the sun shining on it, and his closing thought the exceeding beauty of the world in which he lived.

It is worth noting, too, that the above passage is from one of the two chapters Grey added to Fly Fishing in 1930, long after he was no longer able to see with direct eyes. But though his eyes had failed him, his vision had not.
Our farewell to Grey is our farewell to angling books of the nineteenth century, and there could be no more fitting farewell than Grey's final farewell to his reader:

The time must come to all of us, who live long, when memory is more than prospect. An angler who has reached this stage and reviews the pleasures of life will be grateful and glad that he has been an angler, for he will look back upon days radiant with happiness, peaks and peaks of enjoyment that are not less bright because they are lit in memory by the light of a setting sun.
Footnotes


2 Ibid.


4 Davy, pp. 162-63.

5 Ibid., p. 168.

6 Ibid., p. 161.

7 Ibid., p. 266.

8 Ibid., p. 279.

9 Ibid., p. 9.


12 Ibid., p. 513.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., p. 505.

15 Ibid., p. 504.

16 Ibid., p. 505.

17 Davy, p. 8.


20. Ibid., pp. 524-25.

21. Davy, pp. 159-60.


23. Ibid., pp. 55-56.


25. Ibid., p. 31.


27. Ibid., p. 195.


29. Ibid., pp. 376-77.


33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., p. 268.

35. Ibid., p. 319.

37 Ibid., pp. 107-108.
38 Ibid., pp. 251-53.
39 Ibid., p. 253.
40 Ibid., p. 132.
41 Ibid., p. 102.
42 Ibid., pp. 105-106.
43 Ibid., p. 21.
44 Ibid., p. 209.
46 Francis, Fish Culture, p. vii.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., p. x.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., p. 17.
52 Ibid., p. 16.
54 Ibid., p. 161.
55 Ibid., p. 219.
56 Ibid., p. 138.
57 Ibid., p. 131.
58 Ibid., p. 271.
59 Ibid., pp. 266-67.
60 Francis Francis, *By Lake and River* (London, 1874), pp. 308-309.
61 Ibid., p. 348.
62 Ibid., p. 219.
63 Ibid., pp. 352-53.
64 Ibid., p. 353.
65 Ibid., pp. 46-47.
66 Ibid., p. 57.
68 Ibid., p. 130.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid., pp. 88-89.
71 Ibid., pp. 90-91.
73 Ibid., p. 177.
76 Ibid., p. 84.
77 Ibid., p. 92.
78 Ibid., p. 78.
81 Ibid.
83 Ibid., p. 35.
84 Ibid., p. 51.
87 Ibid., p. 167.
90 Halford, *Entomology*, p. 147.
93 Ibid.
94 Ibid., p. 1.

95 Ibid., pp. iv-v.


99 Ibid., p. 62.

100 Ibid., pp. 285-86.


102 Ibid., p. 5.

103 Ibid., pp. 2-3.

104 Ibid., p. 102.

105 Ibid., p. 100.


107 Ibid., p. 35.

108 Ibid., p. 19.

109 Ibid., p. 8.

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid., p. 9.


114 Ibid., p. 130.
115 Ibid., p. 132.
116 Ibid., p. 128.
117 Ibid., p. 133.
118 Ibid., pp. 144-45.
119 Grey, *Fly Fishing*, p. 3.
120 Ibid., p. 9.
121 Ibid., p. 4.
122 Ibid., p. 16.
123 Ibid., p. 216.
124 Ibid., pp. 11-17.
125 Ibid., p. 19.
126 Ibid., p. 136.
127 Ibid., p. 43.
128 Ibid., pp. 50-51.
129 Ibid., p. 133.
130 Ibid., p. 211.
131 Ibid., p. 240.


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<td>Barker, Thomas</td>
<td>Barker's Delight: or, The Art of Angling</td>
<td>Wherein are discovered many rare Secrets very necessary to be known by all that delight in that Recreation, both for catching Fish, and Dressing thereof. 2nd ed., much enlarged. London: Humphrey Moseley, 1659.</td>
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Appendix 1: Pseudonyms Used by Nineteenth Century Authors Mentioned in Thesis.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonyms</th>
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<td>The Amateur Angler</td>
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<td>South, Theophilus</td>
<td>Chitty, Edward</td>
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</table>
Appendix 2: Brief Biographical Facts on Some of the Authors Mentioned in Thesis.


Boosey, Thomas (1795-1871). Bookseller and publisher of operas. Modern English Biography, I.

Chatto, William Andrew (1799-1864). Born in Newcastle-on-Tyne. Wholesale tea dealer, journalist, and miscellaneous writer. DNB, IV.

Chitty, Edward (1804-1863). Legal reporter, publisher of bankruptcy reports, and author. DNB, IV.

Colquhoun, John Campbell (1803-1870). Born in Edinburgh. Politician and author. DNB, IV.


Davy, Sir Humphry (1778-1829). Born in Penzance, Cornwall. Scholar and poet. It has been said that he was "not only one of the greatest, but one of the most benevolent and amiable of men." DNB, V.

Fitzgibbon, Edward (1803-1857). Born in Limerick. Journalist, drama critic, and writer on angling. Devoted to angling from boyhood. DNB, VII.

Francis, Francis (1822-1886). Born in Seaton, Devonshire. Editor (of the Field's angling section for more than quarter century), writer on angling, and active advocate of fish culture. DNB, VII.

Grey, Sir Edward (Viscount Grey of Fallodon — 1862-1933). Born in London. Statesman, bird-lover, and fly-fisher. "He saw a grim future for mankind, the more so as he had less than no sympathy with the increasing mechanization of life." DNB, 1931-40.

Halford, F.M. (1844-1914). Contributor to the *Field* (under the nom-de-plume, Detached Badger), and author of several books on fly fishing and related subjects. *Who Was Who*, I (1897-1916).


Medwin, Thomas (1788-1869). Biographer of Shelley, author of the *Conversations of Lord Byron*, and author of angling books. *DNB*, XIII.


Salter, Thomas Frederick (? - 1826). Hatter and writer on angling. *DNB*, XVII.


Senior, William (? -1920). Lecturer, journalist, editor (succeeded Francis Francis as the Field's angling editor), and author. *Who Was Who*, II (1916-1928).

Wilson, Professor John ("Christopher North" -- 1785-1854). Scholar, professor, essayist, and editor. DNB, XXI.

Younger, John (1785-1860). Shoemaker, poet, and writer on angling. DNB, XXI.