ANGLING IN A[illegible]IA

and Elsewhere

By

HOWARD JOSELAND

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ANGLING IN AUSTRALIA
and Elsewhere

Sam's Pool, Snowy River.
From a water-colour by the author.

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AND ELSEWHERE

By

HOWARD JOSELAND

ART IN AUSTRALIA LIMITED
24 Bond Street, Sydney
1921

PREFACE

SOME of the material in this book has already appeared in "The Fishing Gazette" (London), the "Town and Country Journal," and "The Pastoralists' Review" (Sydney). I have to thank Mr. R. B. Marston of the first named journal, and the Editors and Proprietors of the two Sydney journals, for permission to reprint.

Messrs. G. A. Hills and J. E. Paterson, and Dr. Fourness Barrington have been good enough to lend me some photographs for reproduction, and acknowledgement has been made below the print in each case. The remaining photographs, illustrations in colour, and the verse in this book are my own.

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H. JOSELAND,
Wahroonga, N.S.W.
1921.

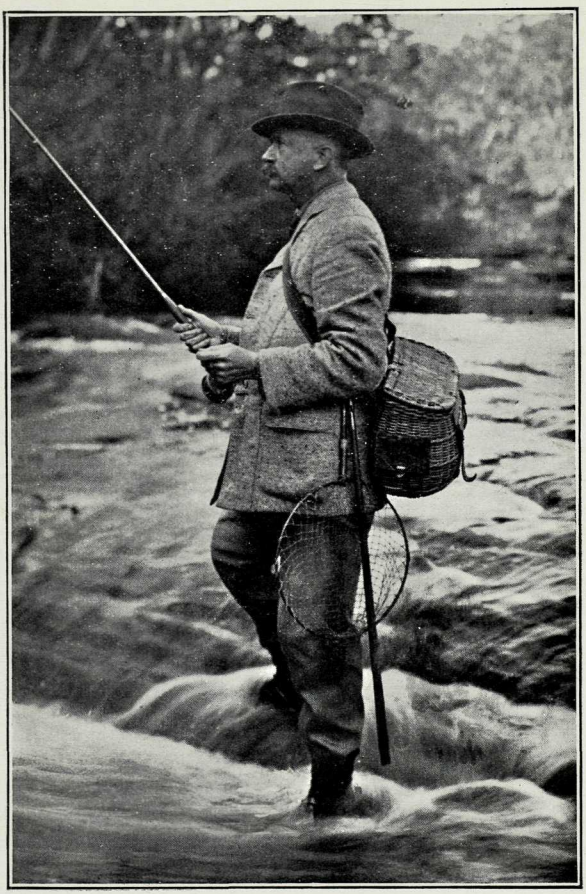

Photo by
G. A. Hill

The Author, 1913.

Howard Ferland

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Sam's Pool, Snowy River, near Dalgety.
Below the rocks is a lovely slow eddy, where, on favourable occasions, nice "rainbows" dimple the water. Under the near bank one or two "brownies" lazily suck in flies. The opposite bank is disappointing; the distance shows the scene of many an anxious tussle under the bank. I have endeavoured to convey my impression of a Monaro summer day. - - - *Frontispiece*

The Author—1913 - - - - p. VI

Four-pounders.
From the upper Queanbeyan, our "rainbows" vary very much in markings, resembling "steelheads," "cut throats" and typical "rainbows," but they were all derived from the same ova sent originally to New Zealand. All fish from the still pools are well conditioned and the flesh a deep salmon colour. Opp. p. 10

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Goobragandra River.
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ILLUSTRATIONS (*Cont.*)

Tuross River.
A photo by Dr. F. Barrington. A famous rainbow, "Nosey bob," lived near here. A mate of mine, Captain Corner, tackled him with a 15/- salmon cast, but omitted to test his real line. "Nosey" annexed the salmon cast. - - - - p. 39

Ribbony-gum, Big Badja.
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Buckley's Crossing.
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Thredbo River.
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Upper Queanbeyan River.
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Ludlow Castle.
On the borders of England and Wales. The River Teme, haunt of trout and grayling, which skirts the town, winds through enchanting valleys. - - - - - p. 103

INTRODUCTION.

THIS book was commenced during a trip from Sydney to England in 1907, when I revisited my birthplace, the town of Worcester. In addition to my desire to interest and be of service to fellow-anglers, one object in its completion has been that of correcting humorously misleading accounts of our Australian fishing which have appeared in works by two most renowned anglers. These men were so highly esteemed by the angling world, and have contributed so largely to the pleasure of members of our fraternity, that my appreciation of them as sportsmen forbids my saying more than that it is evident that they were entirely misinformed.

Although there is much in my book from which its readers may differ, on one point I believe Australian anglers will agree about it—viz., that it is a fair indication of what fishing the average keen angler, who has to make his living by his profession or business, may obtain in the Commonwealth.

English friends may possibly be envious of my holidays on the Snowy and other scattered rivers of New South Wales, extending over a period of twenty years. True, I have made no sensational bags, the best, among the trout, being an occasional ten brace of fish averaging about 1¼ lb., the heaviest being rarely over 3 lbs. weight. About 10 per cent. of blank days, the very occasional discomfort of a hot dust storm, and not one wholly wet day, have left an impression on my memory of sunny skies, and the exhilarating air of the district of the Monaro trout waters.

Here is, within a few ounces, a record of a fortnight on the Upper Queanbeyan and Murrumbidgee in 1906:—

November 1st: 1½, 1½, 1¾ lbs.
„ 2nd: seven fish from ¾ to 3 lbs. and three under ¾ lb.
„ 3rd: 1¼, 1½, 1½, 2, 2¼, 3, 3 and 4 lbs.
„ 4th: seven fish 1½ to 2 lbs.
„ 5th: five fish 1½ to 2 lbs.
„ 6th: ½, 2 lbs.
„ 7th: ½, 2¼ lbs. (large fish broke away).
„ 8th: eight fish ½ to ¾ lb. (four returned).
„ 9th: three under 10 ozs. returned.
10th: ½, 1 lb.
„ 11th: twelve ½ to 2 lbs.
„ 13th: six, ½ to 1½ lbs.
All the fish caught were rainbow trout.

On November 5th it snowed and the next two days were cold. Flies used were: Red wasp, Irish lake, green hopper, stone fly, Hoffland's, coachman, governor, tea-tree and coch-y-bonddu—the last two doing most execution.

That the most frequented waters do not yield trout in the same quantities or weight as during the first few years after 1900 (about the commencement of our trout fishing), is not to be wondered at, especially where all the fishing is free and in a country too vast to protect adequately. Some streams have been almost fished out by greedy men, some of whom even go so far as to take barrels and salt down almost every fish they catch.

Still, in spite of unsportsmanlike killing of fish, there are, comparatively, so few anglers on our rivers, that a vigorous man, especially if he leave the beaten tracks, will be able to command fair trouting for many years to come, and it is hoped that in time the Government may see fit to preserve more efficiently so valuable an asset.

The all-round angler has ample opportunity in New South Wales. When the Monaro or New England plains and mountains are too distant, he may leave alone their dry, sunny air and sparkling streams and in a few hours revel in the balmy winds of the sea coast, refresh himself by wading in the wavelets lapping the shores, or dodge the tumble and tossing of the breakers. In a boat he may rest on the quiet waters of our inlets or wrestle with the game fish of our estuaries. If he is interested in the flora and

fauna, Australia presents a wealth beautiful and curious; a never-ending source of pleasure to those who use their eyes and ears.

The spring months are prolific with graceful and bright flowers. The boronias, flannel flowers, sprengelia, hardenbergias, yellow pea-flowers and lobelias are only an indication of a rich variety to be found on our coast. Inland there is the tea-tree bush with snow-white blossom, jewelled with emerald, black, and brown beetles; orange wasps, and many delicate insects. On the plains are daisies, vetches, Monaro primroses, and blue star flowers like little flecks of sky peeping through the grass, and the modest pink crowsfoot delicately suffuses favoured places.

There are no old ruins of medieval buildings and few historic associations, but the Monaro plains, with their picturesque groups of granite boulders, remind one of Stonehenge.

. . . . . .

The literature of Angling in Australia is almost an unknown quantity, but the books of Isaak Walton and Sir Edward Grey are in spirit applicable to the country. The Father of angling, Isaak Walton, wrote *The Compleat Angler* during the period in which the Cavaliers and Roundheads were cracking each other's skulls in the neighbourhood of my native town. Under the shade of Powick Bridge, a medieval structure, and the scene of one of the fiercest fights, I have caught trout, roach and chub. The combatants, under conditions of the period, were almost as remote from Walton, fishing on his beloved Dove, as we are from European nations at war. Walton has been accused by some of his enemies as "not risking his skin," but he had, when he wrote his book, already lived sixty years of honourable citizenship, and therefore he was justly entitled to take pleasure as he liked, especially as it gave offence to no man. His recreation doubtless contributed to his living happily to the ripe age of ninety, and his book, now a classic, written in the year 1653, has since delighted anglers as no other book on angling has done.

When the might of the British Empire was menaced and the fate of Australia in the balance, the author of the most charming work on Fly Fishing since Walton's time—Sir

Edward Grey—whenever he got the chance, ran down to his favourite Hampshire streams, where he skilfully cast a fly on the peaceful and refreshing waters. Of him, Gladstone is reported to have said: "Edward Grey might do anything in politics, but he prefers to go a-fishing." Sir Edward has fulfilled his own words in his book on Fly Fishing—the Introduction to which is full of high ideals—where he says: "If work be worthy or noble, the greatest satisfaction of life is to be found in doing it well; the exercise of his highest powers or qualities is the glory of man's being, and the discovery or development of them by use transcends all pleasure"; to which no comment need here be made, except that the reading of the two works above alluded to is quite worth while, being instructive in the Art of Fishing, and appealing to the best sides of ourselves. Both of these Anglers reveal their companionship with the works of nature; the murmuring streams, songs of birds, and beauty of flowers of rural England. Those of us who enjoyed the same delights, treasure the memory of days by trout waters, shady lanes and open moors, the tramping to and fro through the picturesque old towns and the charm of the old villages with their gay cottage gardens. The finding of the first daffodils, primroses, and violets, on the banks of some brook, was an annual event ever fresh.

In Australia the shade of the manna gums and river oaks calls us no less than the piping of the grey thrush, the mellow call of the honey-eaters, and flute note of magpie and shrike. The first gleam of sunlight glorifying the grey trees on the distant hills or on the ridges towering over our camp by the rivers, the deep quiet pools where the big fish swim around and the rapids, where more vigorous young "rainbows" snatch our flies, haunt us in our dreams, urging us on the first opportunity to get our rods out and "go a-angling."

GREY THRUSH.

Oh grey thrush! where have I heard you calling?
In an upland near the stream side;
Your voice mingling with the waters falling,
Neath the foliage where you hide.

Oh grey thrush! where have I heard you calling?
In the wind-bent scrub by the seaside,
Whilst the fishermen their nets are hauling,
Away in the lazy slack tide.

Oh grey thrush! where have I heard you calling?
By my flower garden bed side,
My listening ear, sweet notes enthralling
With your mating song in spring tide.

Oh grey thrush! I've sometimes heard you tuning
Your notes subdued, in the woodside,
Whilst to your young fledglings softly crooning,
As lovers' voices in moontide.

Oh grey thrush! your calling's not quite singing,
Like throstles on earth's other side;
But grey thrush! it's sweet, to my heart bringing
Fond memories at eventide.

CHAPTER I.

Reminiscent.

The angler of artistic temperament, who revels in the contemplation of Nature's fairest scenes, finds a charm in Trouting, its associations and reminiscences, not realised in any other sport. What prize so coveted by the angler, from his school days onwards, as the trout? What fish is found in such diverse waters, almost all over the world; from the little rill that tinkle-tinkles half concealed between luxurious banks of herbage, to the strongly flowing river; from the tree-enshrined and weed-grown fish pond, to the mountain-bound loch; from glacier-fed streams of icy regions, to the water-courses of Australia's sunny plains?

Never shall I forget landing my first troutling, a pretty little chap of some eight inches long; nor my satisfaction when, on receiving a holiday letter from my school mate saying that he had caught his first trout, I found that I had forestalled him by a day! Though forty years ago, and on the other side of the world, I could point out the nook now, as I could almost any other spot where I have since grassed a spotted beauty. It was in the spring time of an English Midland county and I had walked five miles to try my luck. The locality was half garden, half woodland, in which was a little pool just under an old flood gate, over which the water glided, except what little squirted through the cracks in the woodwork. Out of the pool the little brook ran over pebbles to hide under bushes overhanging the verdure-clad banks; then on past meadows bright with yellow cowslips, daffodils and buttercups, and through dells decked with primroses, bluebells and anemones. There was shade, I remember, over the pool, of some oak or sycamore, and the sun came glinting between the delicate spring leaves on to the rich green grass, in spots and dashes with a mellowness that to my recollection of early days seems peculiarly English. I had read that no man could call himself an angler till he had caught a trout; so I felt that I had taken an important step in life.

My first lesson in angling, when I had caught a gudgeon, at Pixham Ferry, on the Severn, had been under the guidance of an uncle; I had also caught roach, dace, chub and

perch, and had snared jack and eels, but what were the best of them to my new treasure? Back at school, my chum and I laid schemes, how we would lure on a day-boy to let us fish in his father's preserves on the Chess, where on bird-nesting bent, we had seen "monsters," with faintly moving tails and fins, lying in pebbly shallows. Luckily for us the boy was a dunce, so we got at him with bribes of prompting in class—which was done, by the way, by my chum, he being smaller than I and better able to dodge the master's gaze; besides, I was a bit of a dunce myself. So one holiday, having provided ourselves with brandlings and a few caddis worms out of the mill stream which flowed through our school grounds, we set out with rods and creels filled with tackle and lunch.

Away we went, through grass paddocks and cornfields, passing hayricks and farms till at last we crossed the crown of the hill which separated us from our valley in which the "Loud-water" stream ran. Then over a stone wall, down the hill again past a fir copse on the right, and a rabbit warren green with nettles and on to the flat beyond, and so through a grove of trees to the stone bridge over the stream. This was the boundary line: below were forbidden waters, but how we longed to try them where they broadened out into a lakelet. The half-dozen trout lying under the bridge must be left, so we wandered on through pine groves and wild flowers by the stream, cautiously peering for signs of the prey.

Fishing in the likely spots, we soon had fish of two pounds weight. One monster we could not catch, so, boy-like, we pelted him with stones. He was afterwards landed by the dunce, with a small fly, and weighed eight pounds!

We returned with a nice basketful of fish, and took them to the school tuck-shop in the village, kept by a motherly dame, who cooked them for us next day; and we sneaked out of bounds, risking all penalties, and feasted right royally in a back parlour at 3 p.m.

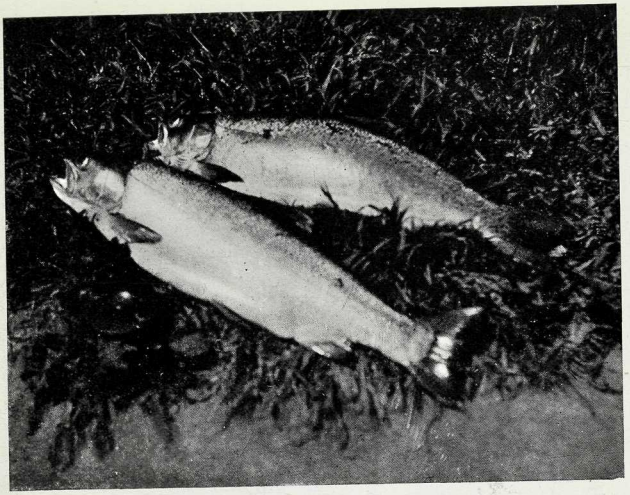
We had other days' fishing on that stream, but at last, one day when they would not bite, we took to snaring the trout in a manner which, for the sake of our Australian fisheries, I will not disclose. It was great fun we thought then, but it proved to be disastrous, for we were henceforth forbidden

to fish there again. However, we did so with much fear and trembling, and were caught by the "gammy"—his wretched little terrier nearly found the trout we had hidden under a bush. It was on one of those excursions that the kingfisher flew screeching out of a hole in the bank, and to our joy we had found a much coveted nest; but we broke the only egg getting it out!

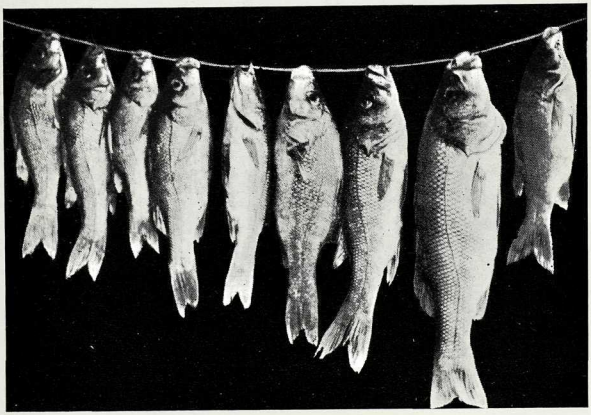
Then, when school days were over, on every favourable occasion I would tramp miles through country lanes and woods, by hedgerows of hazel and blackthorn, or through hop yards, to some secluded brook rippling by stony beaches, tearing in rapids over miniature waterfalls, or at rest in deep, quiet stretches. The streams were mostly too overgrown to cast a fly on, so I would lead the bait into the eddies or under bushes, or spin a minnow near an overhanging bank or past an old log; sometimes dapping with a daddy longlegs or house fly, I would land a brace or two and be quite content. But what had the most fascination for me, where it was possible, was fly fishing—with its fine tackle and delusive feathered flies, the skilful manipulation of the flies into the spots where the trout were lying; then the rise and play of the fish, and the suspense lest the cobweb-like tackle should give way; and always the satisfaction when at last the prize was safely stowed away in a basket of freshly plucked grass!

And such was trouting in the English Midlands that each outing was associated with some old manor house, mediæval castle or ancient parish church with its ivy-clad tower, toned by ages of Nature's painting, and backed with the spring green, summer or more varied autumn tints of lofty elm, sturdy oak, sycamore or ash; a foreground of cottage gardens, bright with lilac, roses, hollyhocks, and a wealth of other familiar blossoms.

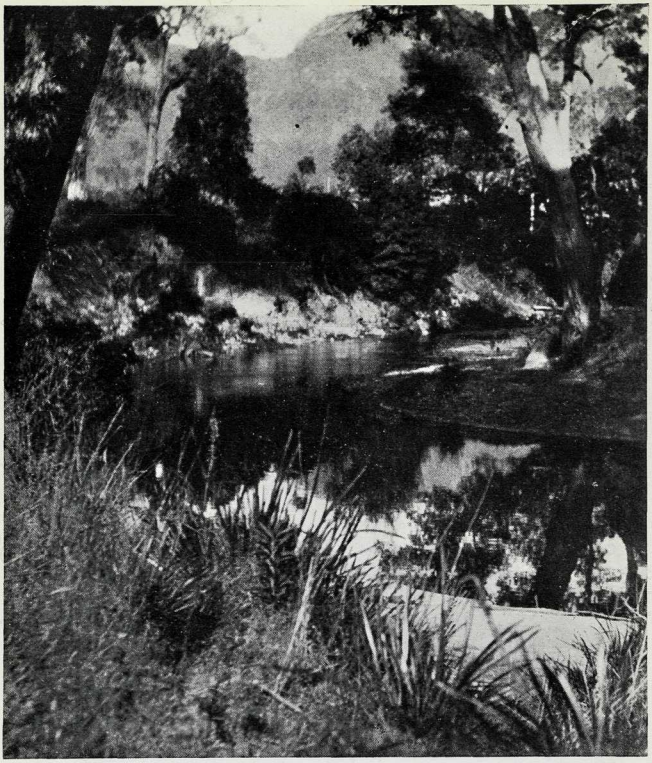
I would lunch at a picturesque old inn, its straw-thatched roof overhanging black oak timber framing and whitewashed plastered walls. Usually the fare was of home-cured ham and fried eggs, perhaps served in an oak-panelled room richly coloured by age, and with rafters hung with bacon sides; and the amber-coloured cider, how it was relished! I recall the villages of Mathon, Cradley, Suckley and Leigh, all on the same stream (to which in turn each gives its name) and which flows into the River Teme in the valley below



Four pounders—facing.



Perch.



Gloucester River.

those beautiful Malvern Hills, celebrated for their pure air and purest waters.

Memory wanders on to quaint old Ludlow—one of the places that seemed to have been finished three hundred years ago—famed for possessing the ruins of one of the finest of old castles, founded by the Normans, enlarged by the Tudors, and still further during the reign of good Queen Bess. On the borders of England and Wales, almost encircled by the River Teme which is crossed by two quaint mediæval bridges, it had formed a strong fortress to keep the Welsh out of England, and was the scene of many a bloody fight. From its parapets little pleasantries of molten lead and jagged boulders dropped on invading foes. Good sport I have had with trout and grayling in the Teme and Ledwyche nearby, landing some ten or twelve brace of the rich, golden-tinted trout of the smaller stream.

There rises also before me in visions of the past, a glorious chestnut tree, far famed for hundreds of years, nourished by the Darenth below the bridge at Farningham. From the meadow waters lower down, one Easter, I took some good trout, casting down stream contrary to all orthodox methods.

When I left England in 1886, in search of health, I was attracted to New Zealand by accounts of trout fishing in the neighbourhood of Christchurch. As chance had it, however, I landed in Auckland, but at that time a local hatchery had only recently been established and it was not till some six years later that acclimatisation in the Waikato district proved successful enough to admit of angling in the rivers there.

The second season, on a holiday from Sydney, I fished at Oxford, near Okaroire. It took eight days from Sydney then, including the steamer trip to Auckland and train journey of 100 miles to Oxford. Arriving too late to fish that night, I was in time, however, to see five fine rainbows brought in by the hotel-keeper, the heaviest, about 7 lbs. weight, making my largest trout of 2¼ lbs. caught in England, seem diminutive.

The next morning my host drove me three miles to one of the three adjacent rivers, a clear stream of about six yards wide, running so strong that it was only possible to wade it in places and to cross it at long intervals.

A brother angler in Auckland had advised me to use a brown Devon minnow or a natural sand fish on an Archer spinner, flies at that time not having been very successful.

Whilst taking stock of the water I thought I detected something amid stream, half substance and half shadow, something alive, with movement, a brownish streak over two feet long. It lay in the play of sunlight dancing through the shade of an overhanging bush. Could it be a monster trout? I looked intently, but I was not the only observer: the shadowy substance was watching me also. It moved away uneasily but returned to position, steadied itself and lay there in that provoking and watchful attitude that trout so often assume when alarmed; next it was gone like the shadow of a swiftly flying bird. I tested my tackle and wondered what it would feel like, and what I would do if I hooked such a fish.

Trembling with excitement, I made my first cast in a strong-running pool at a bend just above. At once I was into a large fish. Down stream he went, jagging and fighting, tearing yards of line off the whirring reel, whilst I did my best to follow him, passing my rod over bushes and round tree-stems, not knowing where he was leading me to. Soon he came to the tail of his pool and there we fought it out, I wondering all the time how I was to land him, the banks being high, bushes in the way and the water strong and deep. On the other side was a shelving beach, the only possible spot to favour me, and there presently I had him floating on his side, a good six-pound fish. I was at my wit's end what to do next. There appeared to be no place to cross, so I determined to try and work him down stream, negotiating more obstacles. All at once my line slacked and I beheld his lordship float away free again.

Shortly after, my Devon found another fish, but all I knew was a long screech of the reel and a fish bolting down through pools and shallows, then a sort of tangle up between a frantic thing and a hopeless density of bushes; such a splashing and tugging, and I so helplessly placed that it came as a relief when the line slackened. I sadly reeled up my line and moved on. But better luck was in store, a five-pounder came to my net, and later a brace, making up 10 lbs. in all; not a bad day's sport for those times, counting the

fish that had played with me also. The next day, using the Archer and natural sand-fish, I struck several large fish, but went home with an empty creel.

What has since developed of this fishing has become world renowned, but it was pleasant enough to wade typical trout streams in a new land to me, where the river-ways were full of the gladness of fresh foliage, albeit that the cabbage-tree palm, flax, and manuka took the place of alders, willows and hawthorn. The undulating volcanic country surrounding, though unattractive, was clothed in places with what might have been, from its resemblance, the English bracken fern.

But this was not my first experience of trouting overseas. Five years previously I had run over to Launceston, Tasmania, to try the rivers there. They were all in flood so I went down to Hobart, thence to Macquarie Plains, passing up the valley of the lovely Derwent with its luxuriant hop yards, and on to the Ouse forty miles by coach. The rivers were out of order there also, but I landed at that spot my first trout in Austral waters, a ¾-lb. Salmo Fario, which succumbed to a red-tipped governor after refusing a soldier palmer. A friend joined me later, and we camped at an English-looking inn. Round about were grassy meadows, with ox-eyed daisies and hedgerows of wild roses, intersected with glittering streamlets lapping the red roots of pollard willows.

But there were other things, strange to me; paddocks eaten bare by rabbits, log fences through which snakes sometimes crawled; one day walking through grass I caught a black snake in my landing net. New Zealand presented no such diversions as these. We visited neighbouring station houses and fed plentifully of luscious strawberries and raspberries from gardens that recalled my native Midland county.

The Devon minnow and Archer were chiefly the order of the day there. The Ouse yielded a few three-pounders and the little Dee some nice fish that required six to scale that weight. Then we varied the fish diet with an occasional hopper, alder, or other artificial fly, which latter they did not take kindly to. The time of year was November, and the days were pleasant and warm, but the evenings too cool for

loafing in the open air. There it was that our experience of horse flesh was somewhat adventurous, for having been let down by an animal that was groggy at the knees we bargained for the use of a staunch-looking steed, the owner of which started us off with the remark that "it was a pity the horse was blind."

But as these trips were too few and far between, and took up too much time, I was only too glad to take a hint from Mr. Brodie, Secretary of the New South Wales Fisheries Department in 1900, to try our recently stocked rivers. And so began my association with the Snowy, a river unexcelled in its charms and attractions to the trout fisherman; one of the oldest of creation's works. Its characteristics, unique and fascinating, have drawn me irresistibly each summer since my first acquaintance with it, as the Dove drew Isaak Walton. May it be carefully treasured and kept undefiled for the recreation of those who toil in dusty cities!

In the following pages it will be found that I am dealing chiefly with New South Wales, and Sydney as a centre. Victoria is the only other State in Australia that has successfully acclimatised trout, which are there to be found in waters adjacent to the southern borders of N.S.W. My notes in connection with salt water fishing are applicable to most of the coastal waters of Australia, but Queensland and West Australia present fields of which I have had no experience.

RINGBARKED.

Old tree, some years ago,
I saw you flourish by the stream
Whose waters idly flow:
So long ago, it seems a dream!

You then were in your prime,
Seedling and sapling days had passed
Down avenues of time,
E'er tardy white man came at last.

Year after year you grew,
In winter storm, through summer heat.
Birds to your branches flew,
Whilst flowers blossomed at your feet.

Then listened kangaroos
To sighs your leaves and breezes made;
You welcomed wallaroos
For generations 'neath your shade.

The timid waterfowl
Swam unmolested your domain,
The dingo's dismal howl
You heard; an echo howled again.

Your branches gleaming white,
In strong and graceful bend did hold
Your leaves out to the light.
In sunset glow they turned to gold.

But now, alas! you stand
With gaunt and naked arm in air,
You seem to raise a hand
In futile, agonised despair.

On every stilly eve,
With misty twilight's hovering,
A requiem, believe,
A kindly magpie comes to sing.

Yet in your place shall come
New trees which flowers and fruit adorn;
Fair children find a home,
Where smiling gardens greet the morn.

CHAPTER II.

THE TROUT OF MERRITT'S GORGE.

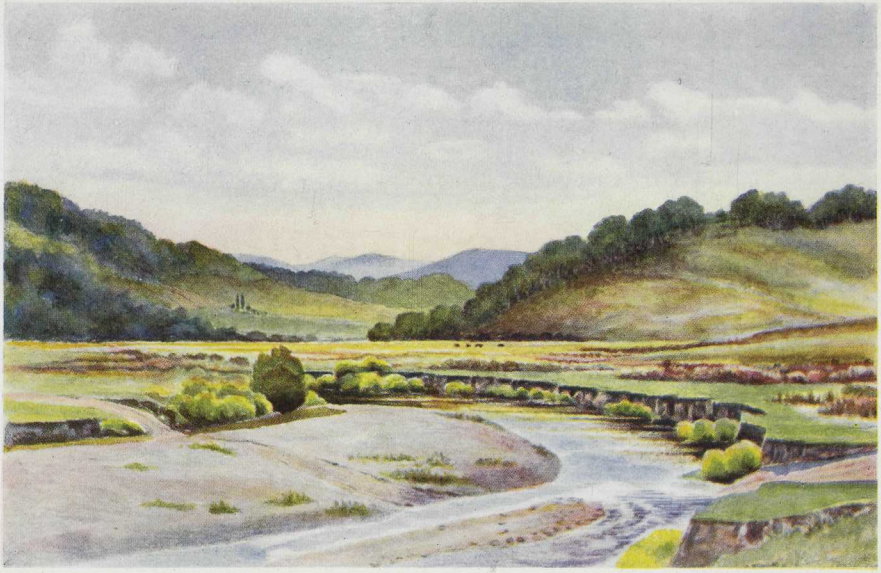
To enjoy the river's romance and study its secrets to the utmost, one must necessarily separate oneself temporarily from one's companions.

A brother angler remarked to me when discussing competitions, that they were not attractive to him, he would rather get away from the crowd and wander quietly beside the course of a river, fish a little and rest a little in some shady spot, where he could watch or listen to some sweet-noted bird or study some animal or insect new to him; then fish again and so spend the time in the river valley among the entrancing gems of Nature. The very essence of the charm of angling to many, is the rest from the competitive element which enters so fully into their daily lives.

Many a time I have hidden to watch a duck dart here and there after midges, or tend its brood; or, in the quietness of the bush, have seen a platypus playing with its mate or quietly feeding in some still pool or running stream.

Often have I been deceived by these quaint creatures into thinking some old sodden log was floating and bobbing over the stones and have looked for further signs of a coming fresh, when all at once the seemingly lifeless object has ducked its head, rounded its back and disappeared. Occasionally, in the short twilight, I have seen the quaint wallaby come down cautiously from the neighbouring scrub to drink, or at other times a dingo or fox look suspiciously round and then at the scent of danger scamper off to shelter. And if at the end of the day I have had a brace or two of handsome fish, which moreover happened to be the best shown in friendly rivalry for the day's catch, my cup of happiness has been full.

Record breaking in the way of numbers and weight cannot be the aim of the true angler. My most treasured incidents of fishing have rarely been associated with the largest bags. One such incident, enshrined in memory of early days, was the capture of that pound trout, which fell to the lure of a Hearder's plano-convex minnow. Long time had he sheltered under that tangled bush overhanging the little gravelly run below the bend of a Herefordshire stream,



Russell's Flat, Eu-e-cumbene River.

where the violets and daffodils grew. He had fattened on the insects that had fallen from the blackberry and alder bushes. His neighbours rarely attained the weight of half a pound, so when the plump golden pride of the stream was coaxed ashore, an indelible record was made which it is pleasant to revive.

Then there was the trout of Merritt's Gorge. Her ancestors traced their pedigree back to the ice ages of North America, and for centuries they had gambolled and frisked, generation after generation, in the streams from the sun-melted glaciers of California which send down waters laden with milk-tinted sediment through their awe-inspiring rocky gorges. In these latter days their ova had been transplanted to New Zealand, where after transformation into full-grown fish, their ova in turn endured the vicissitudes of further travel and were hatched out in Austral waters near Sydney. The little fingerling of many years back had developed and sported in the big pool to which it had worked its way, where nearby a shepherdess watched her sheep on the rugged granite Monaro mountain close by.

For eight summers I had searched the river for such a prize, till at last one day I with companions ventured into the Gorge. We were camping at our old spot at the mouth of the Gorge, but had resolved to explore. With a local resident acting as our guide, we tramped up hillside sheep tracks, over knobs of rotten rock, through stunted prickly shrubs. Below the river roared and foamed through cramped channels, boulder strewn, and confined by towering cliffs of grey granite propping up the ranges soaring above and behind. Down steep tracks to sandy patches by the water we went; then round a big pool fit for the finest salmon or trout that ever swam, and after lunch rested in shade cast in the glorious sunshine by sheltering rocks.

Here a local angler appeared and told us rumours of large fish over the next ridge, so we followed his guidance and came to wilder water and another large pool. Under the shade of gums on the river strand we found the remains of a camp of the first men who had, the previous summer, tried to pass through the Gorge in a canoe, but had been compelled to transport most of the way, over the mountain spurs.

Whilst examining the river I saw evidence of a trout feeding; a fish to top the weight of any that had been landed with a fly in that district. The rings were far off, so I had to wait until they approached near enough to enable me to get my fly within them. I could see no fly over the water, so concluded that the fish was feeding on food eddying round just under the surface. Many flies I tried—governor, palmers, and some of my own devices, but I might as well have cast on the shore.

I rested, changed my position, cast from new standpoints, but all to no effect, so in despair went away to my companions who were making a nice bag of 1½-lb. fish on grasshoppers. Should I own defeat with the fly and impale a common hopper on a hook? To see the other men filling their baskets was more than human nature could endure, so I sneaked away and in secrecy captured a plump hopper. Almost hoping the trout would spurn the seductive bait I cast out into the pool, with hand ready to cope with a rushing fish. As the seconds passed there was no response, however; with some small satisfaction I cleaned the hook, and, seeking better luck elsewhere, moved down stream; but I could not forget that fish, and was drawn back again to the fascinating pool.

One more try I would have, so a new fly was pressed into service, one of peacock body, black hackle and grey wings. Throwing caution away, I stepped out boldly over some submerged rocks to gain a more open position and made a cast. There was no rise, only a surge in the water like the swirl made by the recovery of an oar stroke. I felt my line tightened and carried away. Out and out towards the open stream, where there were sunken rocks, went the fish, and I trembled lest they should be my undoing. But finding strange water, back the fish came as I reeled in the slack as fast as possible; off at right angles and then down she plunged with strong, steady pull, coming round the pool under overhanging rocks. But I took no liberties and gave plenty of time, knowing that the Snowy River was fairly free of snags and weeds. At last the runs were shorter and the line came in foot by foot. Just as I was getting the net ready my host appeared among the scrub, enquiring what luck I had. I replied by holding up the flopping monster: the heaviest

fish ever caught in that district which I had searched for eight years.

The fishing was practically over for the day, but my host made me go up the Gorge half a mile to see the big falls and try another good pool. My mate came down the stream with an awesome story of black snakes and roaring water. I picked up another 1½-lb. fish, making our total seven and a half brace of no light weight. We clambered up a short cut, almost a precipice, and over a spur; when the rapids and stream tearing into camp pool came in sight they appeared almost a mere ripple compared to what we had left over the hills.

That was one of my good days.

CHAPTER III.

Trout and Their Habits.

In wet fly fishing there is more in enthusiasm and knowing where to fish than in being highly expert at casting, or particular in selecting flies. One develops what has been aptly termed an eye for the water when searching for fish—*i.e.*, an intuition, brought about by experience, of almost the precise haunts of the fish; this intuition is all-important in all fishing.

The habits of various kinds of trout differ considerably; even though transplanted to new surroundings they still maintain their individual ways. Of the acclimatised species in Australian waters, Loch Leven, Brown Trout (Salmo Fario), and Rainbow (S. Irideus), the last is the most voracious and vigorous, and therefore may be looked for in the swift water, if they inhabit the same river. All river trout seem to dislike moving home, so that unless they are captured, destroyed, or driven away by drought, they often haunt the same spots year after year.

They are of roving disposition in still water, there being no flow in any set direction bearing food to them, though some particular feature, such as sunken rock or tree trunk, may be made use of as a sallying point or shelter. Almost at any time, in summer weather, walking along the banks of the Snowy at Dalgety and Jindabyne, one may see Brown Trout and Loch Levens swimming slowly round and round the side eddies, or up and down under the banks of the quiet stretches. If you want to get the largest of these fish, you must cast in such waters and use your subtlest arts. In the evenings, if it be warm, they work into the shallows and side runs towards the banks. The smaller fish, of half a pound to a pound, are generally taken from ripples running over pebbles.

In still waters such as the Upper Queanbeyan, Tuross, or Big Badja, which contain only rainbows, and are normally nothing more than a chain of water holes, there is little to indicate the most likely place for rises. Till one knows the water well or has located fish by their rings, one had better cast anywhere possible, especially in clear water in or near patches of weeds, though at dusk trout may be often traced

poking among weeds on the margins of the pools looking for frogs.

On lakes or large still pools one sometimes sees a line of scum and refuse slowly moving under the varying airs. There, fish food will probably gather. I have seen trout rising in such places, with no evidence of fish elsewhere. Especially do I remember such an incident on Lake Louise, in Canada.

On quiet water, too, it is proverbial that trout "take" where it is ruffled by a breeze. It has only been my fortune to experience that once or twice, when it was accounted for by the proximity of large overhanging willows from which grubs, insects, and flies were blown.

Doubtless, therefore, trout come up to feed in breeze-ruffled water because they expect to find insects beaten down on to the surface. There are only two things that govern their position—feeding and spawning; therefore one should observe the likeliest places in which their food is to be found, whether worms, shrimps, frogs, larvæ, etc., submerged—or grubs, spiders, flies, hoppers, beetles, etc., above the water.

Sandy open stretches with low and bare banks are always barren of fish, and so, as a rule, are long reaches of even-running rapid water, where the bottom stones are small and much of a size; but where the river flows deep and curling on one side, and shallow on the other, one may find fish on either side according to the weather conditions, as trout having their haunts in the deeps may venture out into the shallows when flies are about.

Where you see trees, shrubs, thistles and weeds on the river banks, there will be insect life, and trout waiting for a chance of a tit-bit falling therefrom. I have sometimes explored new water away from the haunts of man, expecting to have exceptionally good sport because it had not been frequented, and I have returned to civilisation with empty creel, there to save a "duck" at last, for the reason that the river banks grew more luxuriant herbage and trout in their wandering moods had stayed there.

Watch the stream where it converges towards a narrow channel, then below the channel where it broadens out into a pool; look for the eddying water at the sides. You should find fish in the narrowest part of the side eddy, right close

to the strong water as it enters the run or pool. Now look again at the centre of the run of water and follow it down the pool. After a little experience you will detect a place, it may be a few or many yards down, according to the size of the pool, where there is a sort of sub-eddying, and change of flow, often caused by sunken boulders. You may always expect to touch a rainbow as your fly reaches this particular location. Below this the stream takes up its course again in quieter and more even run, the fish food being distributed and lessened there.

Frequently I have seen novices walk deliberately into the side of an eddy because there the strong current appeared to be somewhat arrested and therefore afforded comfortable standing: then they fished out into water where the fish did not lie, all the time the fish being at their feet. Twice in one day I saw this happen on the Murrumbidgee, near Cooma, and tried to get the novice to take advice.

In the first instance the fly was dropped accidentally near the angler and was seized at once. In the second, the angler stuck to his error for half an hour; in the meantime I had taken two fish under the opposite bank and had then moved on and taken three more fish from a pool above. I returned to find my man had crossed over and was fishing under the bank where I had been. I cast where he had previously stood, and, to his amazement, hooked and landed a 2-lb. rainbow.

Where the water is broken up by boulders or other obstacles, trout lie in their shelter just out of the stream; often above a boulder in what appears to be the full strength of the current, but which is really a pocket. A favourite habitat of trout is among small boulders over which a steady stream runs, covering the stones with about a foot of water. Fish carefully both the near and far side of the stream, keeping well back in the former case.

When in flood or spate, the course of water changes and brings into range new feeding grounds, therefore, provided the water is at all fishable, cast very close to the banks, and if there are back waters or incoming streams, some of which may be clear, approach these very cautiously and cast a long line; trout always seem to be more wary when out of their usual beats.

Casting in speculation on long, still river pools is uninteresting work. Sometimes, however, one may see fish rising in such places; if so, they are generally roving. Try and find which way they are travelling, and cast a little ahead of them, remembering they seldom move more than two or three feet out of their way to pick up a fly, so that you must be fairly accurate. Rainbows seldom rise when the water is at all coloured by a fresh, except perhaps in the backwaters after sundown.

AN INVITATION.

"Honey scent o' grasses,
Whence do you beckon?"
"We hail from the valley
You must come, we reckon.

See again the great cliffs
Guarding our domain,
Hanging in the sunshine,
Mystic in the rain.

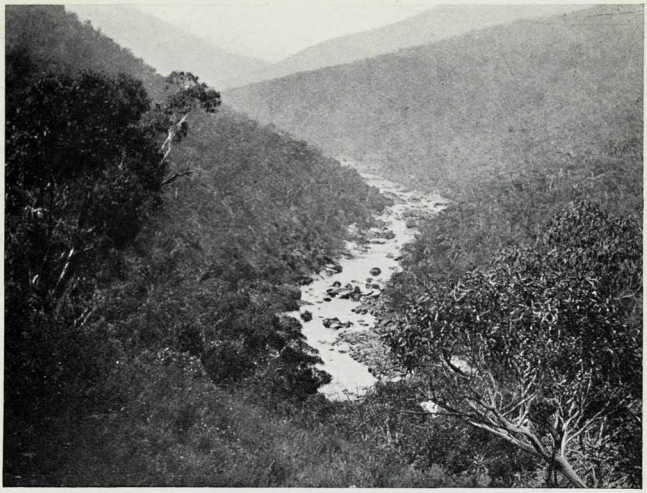
Hear the soft wind swishing
Through the she-oaks tall,
Greens and greys and russet,
Blending through them all.

Push your way through ivy,
Gay with yellow flowers;
Delve beneath the scarlet
Erithrina bowers.

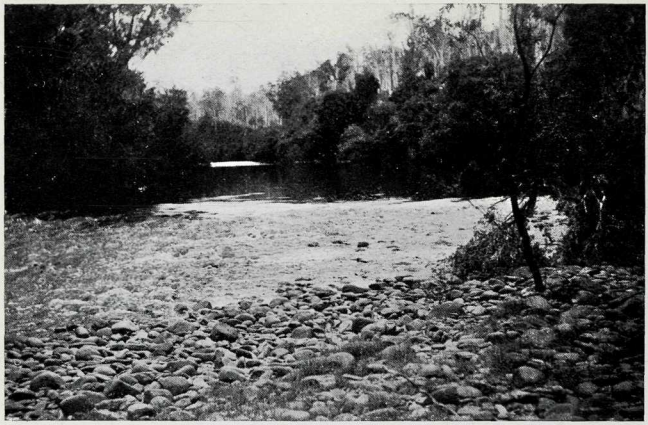
Wade the winding streamlet,
Glittering in the sun,
Lazing in a clear pool,
Tinkling in a run.

See the soft-eyed cattle
Grazing o'er the farm,
Laugh at big frill lizards
Scuttling out of harm.

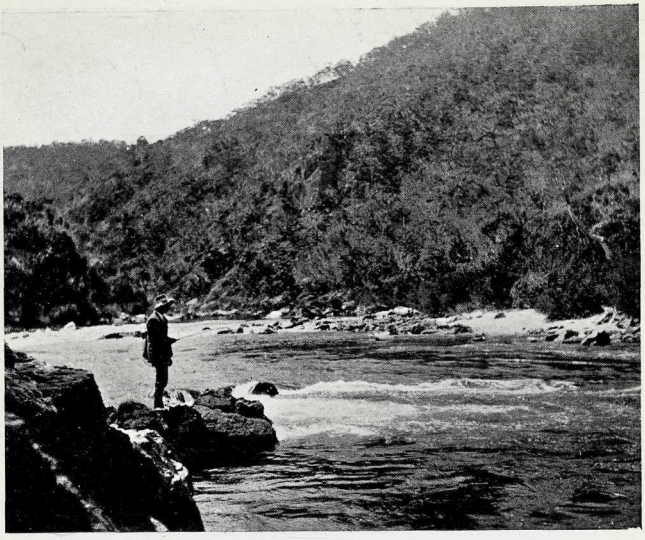
Come, then, to our valley,
Leaving city dust;
Bring our old companions—
You must come, you must!"



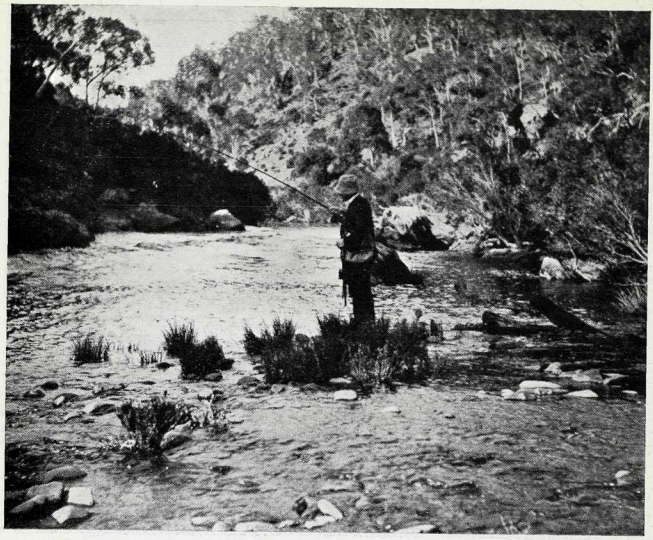
Dead Horse Gully, Snowy River.



Barrington River.



Merritt's Gorge, Snowy River.



Murrumbidgee River.

CHAPTER IV.

It ain't no use to grumble and complain;
It's jest as cheap and easy to rejoice;
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,
W'y, rain's my choice.

—JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

WEATHER, SEASONS, AND TIME.

The practice of using the floating or dry fly has somewhat modified theories as to fishing weather, because it has been found that this style of fishing will sometimes fill a creel when other methods are next to useless. Brought up in England in the belief that one might as well cast a fly on a road as fish for trout in an easterly or northerly wind, I was somewhat surprised on a recent visit to hear a friend of the dry fly cult argue that a rise to a dry fly depended to a considerable extent on whether the wind were favourable or otherwise for putting the fly on the water in its most alluring manner—that is, dropping it upstream over the fish. Subsequently I found that under seemingly adverse conditions it was indeed possible to fill a bag by floating the fly.

The weather influences on Angling in Australia have not yet been sufficiently studied to enable anyone to speak with definite authority, therefore in giving my own experience I feel that there are many gaps to be filled up. The most favourable wind in the Monaro appears to be the prevailing westerly and north-westerly. Unfortunately, to a great extent the Snowy flows with this wind; it is only here and there that the river changes its course so as to admit of this being a fair up-stream wind. Southerly, to which quarter the wind usually veers for a day or so about every ten days, is decidedly adverse. Yet on occasions, during a very cold snap, with the wind in the south, but with the water low and clear, the fish rise well.

Often in the evenings a strong sea breeze from north-east comes up in the Monaro from the coast 40 miles away, bringing billows of cloud-mists over the coast range, and moisture seems to permeate the air in the track of the breeze. It blows so strongly at times that the water is much ruffled, and good casting becomes difficult. So badly do some anglers

regard this wind that they pack up their rods on its advent, maintaining that it puts the fish "down" at once.

Without doubt the effect of the sea breeze is instantaneous and disastrous; the water becomes uninteresting, the ripples and pools assuming an equally monotonous appearance—wind-smitten and grey. I have proved, however, that it is not always absolutely fatal to trout-fishing any more than a southerly wind is to salt-water fishing, and after sundown, though in a strong sea breeze, I have known trout rise in a most abandoned manner.

The reason of this appears to be that whilst the moisture-laden air of the sea breeze sends the day insects to shelter, it does not affect the late evening and night insects, which are so fashioned that they resist the night dews.

Rainy weather is so much the exception on our trout streams in the season that it need hardly be taken into account. During holiday experiences on the Monaro I have never known a wholly wet day.

As compared with the British Isles this is truly a remarkable record, worthy of note. Are there many countries where one can almost depend on a genial, warm and bracing climate to invite one to go out lightly clad, or to camp in dry, exhilarating air, and sleep roofless, except for the star-gemmed sky?

The average Monaro summer temperature ranges from about 65 to 80 degrees in the shade, with an occasional colder or hotter day.

With a high temperature, a strong northerly wind usually blows, in some districts bringing clouds of dust so thick that during occasional gusts, when standing in the river bed, it has been impossible to see the banks ten yards away. Still, on such days I have often found the fish feeding well, and if one only puts up with the discomfort a good bag may reward.

One November I fished the Queanbeyan in a sleet shower and caught six fine trout. In the afternoon came a thick snow storm which covered the ground with a carpet for half an hour. The fish would not rise after the colder temperature had chilled the water.

Many of our Monaro streams are snow fed, most of the year, from the Australian Alps. Snow rarely, in fact,

entirely disappears from these mountains of six or seven thousand feet in height. This accounts for the fact that streams from these ranges are seldom in a condition to be fished till the bulk of the snow has melted.

On the first of November (the opening of our season), the Snowy, Gungahlene, Euecumbene, Thredbo, Goodradigbee, Mowamba, Yarrangobilly, Tumut, and others are often too high for good fishing results. In December and January they approach their summer level, and from February till the close of the season (April 15th) are usually at their lowest. October and November are the most favourable for such still rivers as the Tuross, Big Badja and Upper Queanbeyan; there is no reason why such rivers should not be open to fishing from October 1st. Rainbows—the only trout in them—have usually fully recovered from spawning by that date.

Rainbow trout in still rivers are very capricious feeders. One day, bright and warm, they would not rise till sundown, at which time they became ravenous, and I then caught good fish so long as I could see. Some days they would only rise before sunrise, whilst the mists were still on the water; other days, all the morning, and not at all in the afternoons and evenings, and this, as far as I was able to observe, without any distinct relation to the weather or flies. One can usually depend on getting a brace or two in the twilight, but that lasts only about half an hour. I have caught trout with a wet fly in bright moonlight, but it is unsatisfactory fishing, as one really has to depend upon feeling rather than seeing.

The best hour to fish depends very much upon the food available at a particular locality. During about three months—December to February—grasshoppers are very plentiful, especially in plain country. The fish gorge themselves with them. The hopper is, in fact, to the Australian trout what the May fly is to the English fish, only more of a perpetual feast. If one waits till the sun is well up over the horizon and then walks along the river bank, where herbage is favourable, hoppers will scurry out and many will fall into the water and can easily be picked out. Trout know this condition, so they, too, wait till the sun is up and the air is warm, when the hoppers liven up; then the trout leave their secluded haunts and commence to rove under the

banks or select some favouring current from which to pick up food as it drops into the water. Hoppers are never so much in evidence in the afternoon.

Tea-tree bushes, when in flower, attract beetles and black and orange wasps, which also only rouse themselves in the warmest hours of the day. At such times, fish under those bushes overhanging the water. In rocky country there are but few hoppers; one will find the trouts' food to consist chiefly of spiders, diverse beetles, the larvæ of the caddis (sedge) fly, and dragon fly. Running water contains a supply of food fairly regularly, if not plentifully, which accounts for the fact that trout appear to be on the feed much more frequently in rough water than in the quieter places where food is not constantly carried.

It may be safely asserted, I think, that trout never rise, at least in our streams, unless there is food for them on the top of, or just over the water, but it does not necessarily follow that they will rise because there is an abundance of fly about. They may have something more appetising in the water, or may be satiated with previous feeding. The "wanton sportiveness" of trout is only a poetic hallucination. From close observation when they are jumping, I have come to the conclusion that they are then feeding on the "caviare," the "no see-ums" of the American Indians—tiny duns or midges, almost invisible to the eye.

CHAPTER V.

FLIES.

"The jealous trout that low did lie
Rose to the well-dissembled fly."
—SIR HENRY WOTTON.

I approach this subject with some degree of diffidence, not because I do not feel sure of my ground, but because I recognise that there are many other grounds equally as sure as mine. The last three words of the above quotation apply not only to the form and colour of the fly, but to the manner in which it is presented to the fish.

All experienced anglers will agree that the latter proposition is the real essential, for, given the most lifelike imitation, it is as naught unless you know how to use it. Take two anglers: one has selected an indifferent fly at random, but has a knowledge of the habits of trout and can cast a long and accurate line making his fly fall softly. Another has the most seductive fly and casts indifferently. The former will score best; therefore, if one man excels over others, the secret, generally speaking, is not so much in the fly he uses as his angling qualifications. Nevertheless, the odd trick falls to the angler who observes every little detail; then it is that a knowledge of entomology is advantageous, enabling the angler to enjoy refinement in the sport unknown to his more casual fellow-angler.

Not the least important qualifications of anglers are faith and perseverance. Supposing you fish with a fly you have no faith in, you cast carelessly, flopping your line down anyhow, not searching out likely spots if they give you trouble to reach; you have no enthusiasm, and probably fill your pipe, sit down with very little interest in fishing, and wonder why you left home. Your fly is not on the water half the time, you distrust it, and once having become discontented, you are hard to please, and try fly after fly but do not give any of them a fair show.

On the other hand, you may have had a good day with, or a fancy for, a particular fly, and you start feeling that it is *the* fly. You mount it carefully on your best cast, and because you feel that the trout favour it as much as you do,

you drop it tenderly; you crawl through river reeds, tea-tree, over slippery rocks and through deep water that makes you gasp, you hang out over dark pools clutching some tree limb in the most risky position, just to demonstrate what an irresistible fly it is, and so you fish many of the spots that have been missed by others, and withal the fly is cunningly placed and the action of the natural fly well dissembled; so you gather up unconsidered treasure.

One instance more notable than others comes to my mind Two anglers set out one day, both using a "Joseland's favourite." Up to lunch time one had caught twice as many as the other. After lunch the less successful went across the river, and finding some trout feeding on very small flies, changed his fly to a small black gnat. This proved to be too small to firmly hold the fish, so a medium size coch-y-bonddu was substituted and excellent sport resulted in nine brace of nice fish. As the anglers approached in the evening, the successful man of the morning was seen to be fishing only intermittently and half heartedly. On their meeting again on the same side of the river and comparing notes, the man with nine brace asked the other what luck he had had; the reply was, "No luck, I lost your fly and could do no good. I put on a coch-y-bonddu, but they would not look at it." "Why, that's the fly I have been using all the afternoon!" was the rejoinder.

Returning from a trip, I met a brother angler who, whilst showing me his book, remarked that a particular fly was no good. I had found that fly very good. Thus, much depends upon whether you believe in a fly or not.

In Australia "the fly on the water" is very little indication of what to mount. There is rarely a marked rise of ephemeridae, excepting extremely small duns, too small to be of use. One sees occasionally, about December, a fly resembling an English May fly, which has been named the "Great Red Spinner"; I am not sure whether it is an imago or sub-imago, that is, one of the ephemeridae in its first or second stage after development from the pupa. One of our best known and most beautiful of the ephemeridae I have named the "Black Spinner"; but our trout's larder is most cosmopolitan and appears to consist of any living insect that it can swallow. I have found in trout, pieces of stick, tea-tree blossom and willow leaves.

Should be tied a little smaller.

One of the most killing flies is the "Bredbo," and this, I think, may lay claim to being the first artificial locally made fly. The original was tried at Jindabyne about 1896, by Mr. C. R. Burnside and Dr. A. J. Brady, who with myself may be said to be among the pioneers of fly fishing for trout in New South Wales. It was, however, not generally recognised that our trout would take the artificial fly freely till about five years later. In those days the few anglers who visited or resided on the streams used little else but the natural grasshopper.

From the first, however, I generally used to attach an artificial fly as a dropper, but not for three years did I ever hook a fish on it. The fly then taken was one of my own making, I at once took off the hopper and put on another artificial fly as a tail fly and at almost the next cast was into another trout. From that time I do not think I have ever caught a trout on a hopper. Then by studying the food of the fish more closely I began to look about for likely insects to imitate, and hit upon sundry hoppers, beetles, and wasps, which have been enlarged upon from time to time; the spinners and ephemeridæ being the result of studying Mr. Halford's *Dry Fly Entomology*.

The flies of my own fancy which I can recommend, many of which are in common use, I give herewith, as they may not always be available to my readers. Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 9 in the list are my patterns. The method of dressing flies is described later.

TABLE OF FLIES.

1. "JOSELAND'S FAVOURITE" (wet fly).
   Body: Buff seal's fur, ribbed with gold twist.
   Hackle: Dark claret.
   Legs (tail): Pig's bristles dyed claret.
   Wings: Light speckled turkey.
   Under wings: Yellow, tipped with black.

2. "AUSTRAL" (wet fly).
   Body: Hare's fur, ribbed silver twist.
   Hackle: Light brown.
   Tail: Light red fibres.
   Wings: Light turkey.
   Under wings: Kingfisher blue.

3. "BROWN ANT" (wet or dry).

Body: Seal's or 'possum's fur.
Hackle: Reddish brown.

4. HOPPER HACKLE (wet or dry).

Body: Raffia grass over kapok.
Hackle: Partridge.
Under hackle: Golden pheasant (or yellow hackle).
Tail: Claret bristles.

5. CLARET HACKLE (wet or dry).

Body: Claret fur.
Hackle: Black and white (badger).

6. ORANGE WASP (wet or dry).

Body: Black fur, tipped with orange.
Hackle: Dyed orange.
Wings: Orange hackle tip.
Head: Black ostrich.

7. GREAT RED SPINNER (wet fly).

Body: Light red fur.
Hackle: Red.
Wings: Grizzled hackle, dyed red.
Tail: Red fibres.

8. BLACK SPINNER (wet fly).

Body: Mulberry floss silk, ribbed with quill of peacock herl.
Hackle: Black.
Wings: Grizzled hackle tips.
Tail: Stripped fibre of peacock herl.

9. TUROSS (wet or dry).

Body: Grey-green fur.
Hackle: Cinnamon.
Wings: Buff orpington.

No. 4, in various sizes and dressed wet or dry, is killing on almost all occasions and is the one fly that should always be in the book.

The above have been made by Hardy, of Alnwick, and Ogden of Cheltenham.

My book also contains the following flies:—

"Expert," dressed as claret and mallard, but with red tip and very dark claret fur body and hackle; size 6-8.

Large and small Coch-y-bonddu, various palmer's and Hoffland's fancy, tea-tree, Ogden's invicta, and a few small quills and sedges, to which may be added spent May flies, coachman, governor, march brown, if one must indulge in a few needless luxuries.

I would recommend, however, the inclusion of a few standard small salmon and Irish lake flies.

A ginger palmer with silver tinsel is very useful, wet or dry.

There is much that is illogical in divers theories on flies: One man is a stickler for exact imitation in colour and form, forgetting that no fly was ever hatched with a barbed steel appendage. Another dry fly man calmly mutilates grasshopper flies, having them dressed as ephemeridæ, or a third makes some trivial change such as cutting off a few fibres.

When making up a cast of flies for wet fly fishing select so that you may have a change of colour, a "hopper hackle," for instance, for a dropper or upper fly, and an "expert" for the tail fly. I seldom use two flies, usually only one. Experience teaches that the tail fly is generally taken in preference to the dropper; there are often compensations, such as less liability of entanglement, in using only one fly.

It has been during the short evening rise, after a hot summer's day in which the rivers have appeared lifeless, and in the late afternoon rise, on the still glides at Easter time, that I have been at fault in my selection of flies. I am fairly sure that tiny duns have been answerable for the commotion of the fish in the water; and I have been most successful then with small quills and sedges.

Since writing the above, I witnessed an extraordinary rise of duns (ephemeridæ), on the 7th and 8th of November. In the middle of the first day clouds of small duns hatched out on the Murrumbidgee and were wafted along by the breeze. The rapid water over which they passed,however, was barren of trout, as a fresh had, I feel sure, driven the rainbows to the deep eddies at the head of the pools.

In one of the eddies the following evening, after a hot day, and as soon as the water was overshadowed through the sun disappearing behind a hill, larger duns, with grey bodies, emerged mysteriously in clouds from the water, and at once a number of trout broke the surface, chiefly with tails showing. The fact that they would not take my counterfeit till it had sunk, indicated that they were feeding on the pupæ as they rose to the surface before emerging in the beautiful fairy forms of the sub-imago, or first state of their flying existence. A collection of these flies would have revealed many types synonymous with those of the English rivers.

A year later fishing in the same water, the reason for the rise of duns in this particular spot was very apparent; a very low river had left a bed of water weeds exposed, whilst around was chiefly sand and mud. The pupæ of the duns had existed in the mud gathered round the weeds.

At this time, too, after all day fishing water that appeared to hold but little life, and with only a half-hearted rise or two, the day promised to be blank, save for the pleasure we had derived from watching graceful bee-eaters sail down to pick an occasional butterfly out of the air round the willows under which we had rested. The sea breeze beat heavily upon the last pool we reached, fished by all the township, and here, marvellous to relate, in a few minutes, we rose fish after fish and accounted for five fine rainbows before darkness came on.

CHAPTER VI.

Casting The Fly.

"Now deftly drop a fly beneath that tea-tree bush,
Intently watch it float, you"ll surely get a rise.
Ah! now a rainbow sees it, takes it with a rush!
Steady as he plunges! You've got him! What a prize."

To those who have used rods from their boyhood upwards, the awkwardness of many novices who take up the sport late in life is hard to understand. Some, however, show themselves apt from the first; after a little practice, all they need to make themselves good fly fishers is the added knowledge of trout lore. Love of rural nature must almost be a passion before one can become really proficient in the sport, as I have already endeavoured to show.

I remember reading in some book on Golf, the recommendation, that after trying a few strokes, the beginner should take his clubs and spend days swinging them so as to get used to handling them. This advice might well be adopted in the case of learning to use a rod, either for fly work, spinning or beach casting. So much depends on wrist work that unless one has mastered the control of the rod by the wrist, one cannot become an adept at fly casting.

The rod must be grasped firmly with the hand, the thumb extending up the handle, and as a preliminary, using the wrist only at first, the rod should be waved or sprung vertically, horizontally and diagonally, so as to cast in every conceivable direction, making the rod work or bend to its utmost. Never fear breaking it, a rod that would break under wrist action alone is better broken.

Next, one should use the forearm from the elbow, combined with the wrist action; stretching out with the whole arm, in addition, is only necessary if desiring to reach the greatest distance possible. If you watch any good fly fisher make a long cast, it may seem that he is casting with his whole arm, whereas he is using the arm chiefly to get distance, the impetus to the line being the forced spring of the rod caused by the action of the wrist and fore arm.

The question of the best kind of rod to use is gone into in a later chapter, but an equally important item, the line, must

be briefly discussed before actual practice is commenced.

Assuming that an ordinary ten foot greenheart or cane rod is being used, attach a reel of about two and a half inches in diameter to the butt, with the handle to the left, not to the right. (It is just as well to get into the most handy way of using it at once.)

As an experiment, pass a line of thin thread through the rings and about twice the length of the rod beyond; then try to cast it straight in front. It will be almost impossible, showing at once that a light line is useless; therefore do not commence with too light a line, it will only disappoint.

If you can beg a length of old plaited silk oiled line from a friend who knows the right weight, use this in preference to a new line. The length of line to begin casting with should be about 30 feet. To the running line tie a couple of yards of strong gut cast, with a medium sized fly at the end of the gut. Now to show you what you must not do when fishing, try and crack the line as a whip. In order to do so, you must return the line sharply in the opposite direction to which it has been cast, before the line has become fully extended.

Convince yourself how the error of cracking is accomplished and then try and cast so as to avoid it. You will find that the line must extend behind, not quite to its fullest, before making the forward cast and before imparting the full strength you desire.

Keep the line in play or life, that is, no part must be dead, or without movement. This point is the most important in retrieving either for the backward or forward cast, and whether you practise on grass or water, always see that there is no slack in the line; therefore, for that purpose either raise the rod point or draw in a little line through the rings with the left hand (this can only be done in retrieving the forward cast) before imparting spring to the rod necessary to throw the line backwards. For the forward cast, bring the rod slowly forward about a yard, then force it. It is slackness of the line in retrieving that causes so many failures, and the consequent loss of many an opportunity on the streams.

It is very important to note that the rod, in the back cast, should extend back but a little beyond the vertical, and the forward cast should have expended all its force when the

rod is at about an angle of 45 degrees, though it may be lowered to the horizontal, following the drop of the line, in order to let the fly fall softly.

The reel line should be oiled plaited silk, forty yards long, with thirty yards of backing of thin, strong thread. The weight of the reel line should depend partly on the strength of the rod or the particular class of fishing in view, but for ordinary fly work a No. 2, or 3 trout line, level or tapered, should be procured.

A double tapered line is heavy in the middle and fine at both ends, weight in the centre being necessary in order to enable one to drive into wind, or for long distances.

Learning to cast with both right and left hand is advocated by some, but one rarely finds the necessity for this, provided that one can cast back-handed with the right, *i.e.*, bring the rod across the body to the left and throw to the right. This, if well and accurately done, is a pretty accomplishment and very useful.

Shooting the line is a fairly modern innovation. For this purpose the line must be greased with mutton or deer fat. A length of line is drawn off the reel and held in the left hand, or some of it may trail on the ground or water. When the line during the impetus of the forward cast is pulling, the slack portion is released enabling the loose line to shoot through the rings.

Dry fly anglers invariably shoot a few feet and it is advantageous on almost all occasions, especially when there is not room for a free back cast. If the line is going out too quickly, causing the cast to be falling too heavily, the defect may be remedied by letting out a little slack, whilst if the cast is not falling fast enough, or has a tendency to hang in the air, or to be carried upwards by the wind, it may be brought down by pulling in the line a foot or so.

A word of caution is necessary in regard to shooting the line. In actual fishing it may be over-done, and through an excess of line being off the reel, the line may tangle, or not being absolutely free to run, may result in a jerk or stop in the event of a strong fish bolting; or in a long cast, a fish, when struck, especially a rainbow, may rush in so fast that one has perforce to gather in line by hand. Many a fish has regained its liberty under these conditions; therefore, it is

important to manipulate the slack so that one can readily maintain command of the line with the reel. This is one of the advantages of learning to wind the reel with the left hand whilst holding the rod with the right.

When fishing in a very strong following wind, it is not necessary, and sometimes impossible, to make a back cast. The line is rolled over from side to side with a sharp lift and arched forward sweep of the rod.

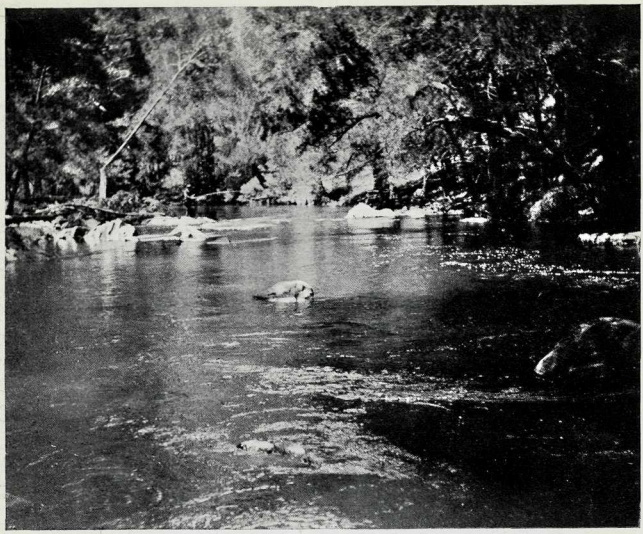
When casting against a strong wind, keep the rod low with a side or back-hand cast, and shoot a yard or two.

In order to get well under bushes on an opposite bank, cast deliberately and slowly, especially in the forward cast, giving the fly time to drop gradually, or it will fall too high and catch in the branches.

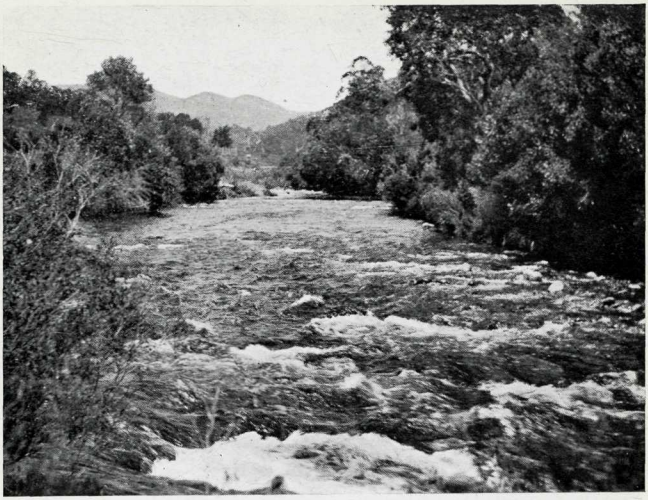
One should not let much of the reel line touch the water in short casting up stream in a fair current; if done, it will probably mean a slack and clumsy lump of line on the water which it will be difficult to recover quickly enough to strike efficiently or cast again cleanly at once in case of a sudden rise; also because with a slack line you cannot imitate, with the dropper, the action of a fly bobbing on the water—a deadly bit of manoeuvring.

Until fairly master of the rod and line, it is well to cast down, and across, stream, with the wind at your back if possible. You are able thus to command a fairly long line and to reach the fish without scaring them, more easily than if you attempt to put the fly over them up stream. Keep out of sight as much as you can by stalking the fish from behind any favouring shelter. Try to keep a straight line without drag on it, i.e., do not hold or pull the fly against the current so as to cause the water to ruffle. In order to do this you must not drop the rod too far at the finish of the cast; keep a little in hand to gradually follow the movement of the fly, pay out line with the current, thus following the fly down without drag to where a fish may lie. There are exceptions to this rule of avoiding drag, which I allude to later on under "Working the Fly." When one has become proficient, up-stream casting may be adopted.

When fishing in quiet, deep water under bushes, drop the fly close to the bush; if you are behind the bush, never mind about looking to see where the fly falls, but be sure that



Goodradigbee River.



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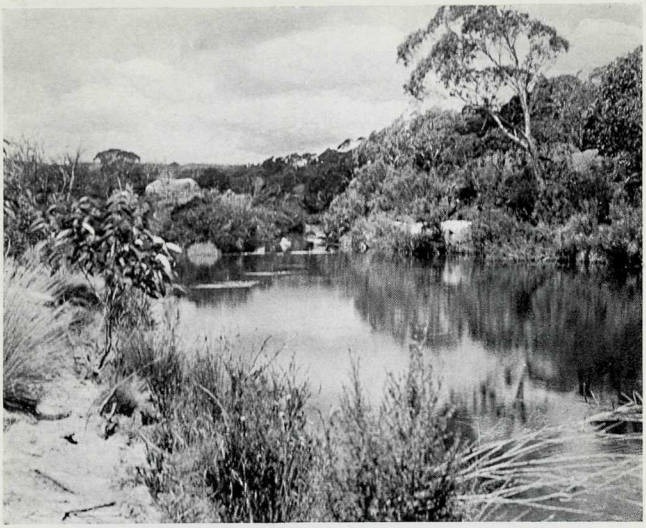
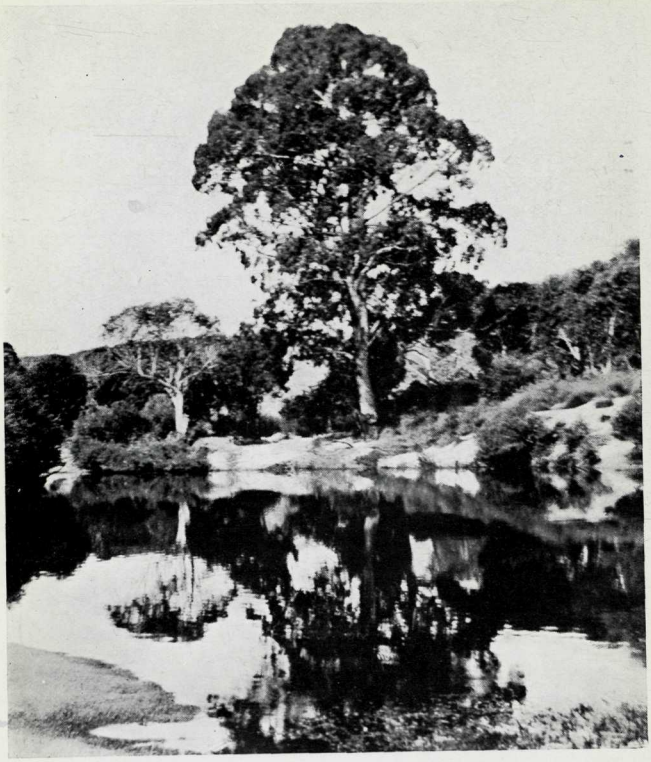


Photo. by Dr. Barrington. Tuross River.



A Ribbony Gum, Big Badja.

your tackle is working well, for a good fish may rush you, and if anything should catch, a break may occur, and the air become clouded with your invectives.

Although I am averse to grasshopper fishing, it is interesting to note that trout will often take the natural insect in full sight of the angler, whilst they generally refuse the artificial fly under similar conditions. The artificial, accompanied by suspicious circumstances, such as the unusual sight of an angler or his tackle, seems to alarm them.

Why then, it may be asked, should the fly at any time be preferred by anglers to the natural bait? To my mind it is, firstly, that it gives considerable satisfaction that it has been possible, by art, to produce the semblance of a fly which deceives the fish, especially if the fly be of one's own make; and one of the refinements of the sport is to acquire the art of fly dressing. Next there is the pleasure of the prettiness of the well-filled book of dainty flies, of the storing up of well-used and successful flies for future comparisons, discussions and remembrances.

All these features contrast favourably with the trouble and time occupied in searching for the natural bait, perhaps at a time, too, when fish are rising fast during a short period only. In the course of a day, the artificial fly may be made to cover far more water than that which could be fished with the more frail, real insect. Finally, with grasshoppers, any unskilled person can catch our trout, and no true sportsman desires to be classed with them.

Just as in other sports, experts have different styles, so the novice at fly-casting may develop his own, always provided that he observes one absolutely unalterable rule, viz., that he must learn to use his wrist to force the spring out of the rod. Beginners often will persist in swinging the rod with the whole arm in a complete semicircle, the rod almost touching the water behind and in front; although they may have some success when trout are plentiful, they cannot get out a long line, and I have never known them consistently to make good bags. Generally speaking, the necessity for fine casting and fine tackle is not so great on our Australian waters as in England, rainbows being more voracious, and less fished over here than there, and also because the natural

food of the fish does not consist to anything like the same extent of such dainty and delicate insects. Grasshoppers, beetles, wasps, dragon flies, and moths, which constitute their chief surface food, have a habit of flopping on the water in a most undignified and emphatic manner, as though to advertise their presence. Still, the best bags, in the long run, go to the best fisherman, and if for no other reason, the pleasure of qualifying in all the niceties of the art should be sufficient to lead any would-be angler to try and excel so as to feel at home on any waters in the world, should occasion give the chance to sample some of them; therefore, cultivate the use of fine tackle and delicate action.

One word as to hooking your fish. In nearly all fishing the action implied by the term "striking" is misleading. One should simply raise the rod sufficiently to feel if the fish has taken the fly or bait; if so, on occasion it may be advisable to use a little more pressure to drive the hook home, though usually the fish will do that in its resistance. More fish are lost through striking hard than by just feeling if the fish has made contact. If not hooked, cast immediately where you think the fish is. A trout, especially a rainbow, will sometimes come three or four times, but be sure not to pester the fish; if it shows shyness, give the place another trial after a good rest.

Remember, the best kind of hook is a sharp one, so look constantly at the point. In stony and rocky country, where a long cast is required, one is apt unconsciously to let the fly touch the stones in the back cast, which may break off the barb. Anglers have often pointed out to me the inferior quality of hooks, when really their careless casting has been to blame.

CHAPTER VII.—WORKING THE FLY.

As a general rule, especially when fishing for *Salmo fario* or *S. levenensis* in quiet water (and they are seldom found in the rough water of our streams), also for rainbows in still water, I let the fly fall and lie on the water as naturally as possible, preferring to cast frequently rather than to draw the fly along the surface, or through the water. Brown and Loch Leven trout, undoubtedly are generally scared by any unnatural movement, and to try it is only to court failure. Should you see a fish roaming in quiet water and you fail to attract, wait till it has moved away; if not frightened, it will almost certainly come back after it has done the round of its swim, usually in the course of a minute or so. Having marked its circuit cast your fly and float it, if possible, in the course you think that fish will take; wait absolutely still (calmly if possible) and very probably you will have the satisfaction of seeing your quarry deliberately approach, its great lips open, and your fly disappear. This is one of the most trying moments to an angler. The temptation will be to strike hard and quickly. Don't do that; but strike deliberately, raising the rod point without undue haste, and be prepared for a rush, your reel line being well under control. I have lost good fish through impetuosity at such a time.

When casting on smooth glides above the top of rapids and anywhere your experience teaches you trout are likely to have their haunts, observe the rule to float your fly with no resistance. In all trout fishing in quiet waters, this practice is so recognised as to have become almost an axiom.

Yet there are exceptions, and the relating of three notable experiences, among others, will give a hint which may save your returning with an empty creel.

Fishing for rainbows on the Upper Queanbeyan in November, 1905, a local angler accompanied me one morning, and grassed only one fish to my six. My explanation to him was that he had worked or dragged his fly, whilst I had floated mine naturally. The next morning we each adopted similar tactics respectively; the results were reversed.

One day when fishing, on the Snowy, also for rainbows, I had only taken one fish in four hours from water which,

I felt sure, was fairly stocked. As an experiment I put on a salmon fly at the tail. I cast across the stream and worked the fly rapidly; I at once rose a fish which chased the fly, and at the third cast was hooked. To my surprise the fish had taken the dropper, which I had left on, a red palmer with gold twist. Immediately after I took three more fish in the same way, all on the dropper. I have repeated the experiment other days with a like result. It was the change of method and not of fly that took the trick on these occasions. Yet why is the small dropper taken instead of the salmon fly? Either because it comes into view first or the fish takes it for an insect being chased by a small fish and is excited into snatching it first.

Rather remarkably, an old angling friend of mine, whom I had not seen for many years, and who in the meantime had fished a good deal in America, proceeded to reveal to me a tip, viz., that he had repeatedly had an experience which proved to be exactly similar to that just related and which I had proved about the same time in another part of the world. I often wonder if the Blagdon Lake trout, in England, would appreciate this manœuvre!

Some local Monaro anglers always use large flies, sunk and drawn, and thus take large fish in the Big Badja, Tuross, Queanbeyan, and similar still streams. This, however, to my mind, is not the most artistic or pleasant fishing and I never would adopt it except occasionally when the fish cannot be attracted by orthodox fly fishing. The fly, in these instances, is evidently taken for some water insect or small fish.

The use of spinning head fly has unfortunately too firm a hold in N.S.W. Like most spinning, it tends to destroy immature fish and disturbs the water for other anglers. To me it seems unnecessary and can in no wise compare with fly fishing.

Fishing in the quiet bend of the river just above Jindabyne one morning, when a stiff, warm northerly wind was blowing, I floated a huge palmer of black, yellow and orange on the dancing wavelets. I was just about to give up when up came a nice rainbow and hooked on. I cast again but the fly lay sodden on the water. Nothing happened till I began to retrieve the line when up came another trout. By

adopting the same plan again and working the fly a little I rose seven and went back to the hotel with four nice fish. It was difficult to induce a fish to look at a fly on this water in other conditions.

THE BIG BADGA.

Oh! stream of many moods,
Older than thought can span,
You flowed through these old woods
Ere birth of man.

Quenching the thirst of birds,
Badger and wallaby,
Timid kangaroo herds
Mercifully.

Drowning the sleet and snow,
Ruffing under a breeze,
Mirroring sunset glow,
Mimicking trees.

Halting in rock-bound pool,
Sleeping in summer heat,
Seeking your rest in cool,
Shady retreat.

Swelled by the fall of rain,
Merry you raced along
Shallows that sang again
A soothing song.

You rose on grassy mead,
Creeping over the bank;
Bending the slender reed
Or herbage rank.

Foaming o'er boulder bed,
Leaping a cliff of rock,
Roaring through gorge ahead
Like thunder-shock.

Hiding 'neath bushes green,
Sparkling in summer light,
Dancing in silver sheen
Of pale moonlight.

Now you harbour the fish,
Showing a rainbow gleam;
Fulfil my utmost wish,
An angler's dream!

CHAPTER VIII.—THE ROD.

The chief consideration, apart from expense, is the most useful length and weight; in both of these points constant modification has taken place during recent years, till at the present time it seems that the best makers have arrived at perfection.

For inexpensive rods of some durability, nothing can excel greenheart, though probably some of our own timbers, carefully selected, such as Australian spotted gum, ironbark, and grey gum, which I have experimented with, may approach it.

Greenheart for first-class rods has many adherents. In point of resilience and casting power, when new it is good. One drawback to its use in Australia is that our hot and variable climate is apt to play all sorts of pranks with it. I have never seen a greenheart rod keep its shape for more than a season or two, under these trying conditions; therefore, if one wants a straight rod it would be necessary to renew every two or three years.

Greenheart has a reputation for breaking off short; when a fracture occurs, it will nearly always be found that the cause is a cross or waved grain, which should have been discovered in the shop and the rod rejected.

All rods are liable to break off at the ferrule, the reason being that the working of the rod breaks the varnish at the junction of the wood and metal and allows the damp to enter, or that water gets down the ferrule and soaks into the wood behind the varnish, thus causing rot. To guard against this, varnish these places with best carriage copal varnish occasionally.

If out of shape, rods should have the rings stripped off and then be fitted together as straight as possible and re-ringed. A rod may be made almost as good as new in this way, though its lost spring cannot be entirely restored.

In these days of tournament casting, one aspect of the rod is too much overlooked, i.e., the yielding quality when playing a fish.

Notwithstanding the reduced weight and length of modern rods, there is a tendency to make them stiff so as to obtain more power, and in dry fly fishing, rapidity of action, so as to dry the fly quickly.

Some of these modern rods (I refer chiefly to built cane), are altogether too hard on fine tackle and the line leaves the rod top at an angle instead of a gradual bow, when even a fair fish is pulling hard. The rod does not respond sufficiently to the strain on it; it feels too harsh and one does not experience the same pleasure as when it is well bowed in graceful continuation with the line.

Rod and tackle should be a shade too light rather than too powerful for the occasion. This is one of the secrets of exacting the fullest gratification out of the sport, in all branches of rod fishing.

When selecting a built cane rod, look at the fittings. If first-class, they are generally a guarantee that the maker has not wasted inferior material and workmanship on it. Occasionally well built and sound cane may be found in a cheap rod; in fact, a friend of mine says that one of his best rods cost only 15/- originally, but it was re-ringed, re-ferruled, and bound more closely by himself.

I, for years, had a prejudice against steel-centred rods. It appeared to me that the addition of metal must add unnecessary weight, whilst the amount of steel was so small that it was stiffened by the cane, rather than that it stiffened the cane. However, opinions differ so much on this subject, that I will pursue it no further than to state my experience.

Using an Allcock's first-quality steel-centre built cane, which cost about six pounds, and with only half an hour's preliminary practice with it, I scored highest in delicacy and accuracy in a competition of the N.S.W. Rod Fishers' Society, in 1908. With the same rod Mr. C. F. Lindeman won the first long-distance tournament ever held in Australia. As we were both inexperienced in competition work, I attribute our success greatly to the beautiful working of the rod.

While in England, in 1907, a friend asked me to try his "Hardy's Perfection," two-joint, steel-centre built cane rod. It was 10ft. long, and for trout fishing quite fascinated me. A rod of this type, with or without steel centre, I consider suitable for our average trout fishing.

That these "Perfection" rods are capable of sustaining great strain is proved by the fact that one I selected for the late Mr. A. E. D'Arcy, used in one of the record catches of trout from a river running into Lake Taupo, N.Z., landed

many rainbows averaging 9lbs. and up to 21lbs. weight. The rod was sound and straight and quite good throughout after this performance.

One great disadvantage of a steel-centred is that it cannot be spliced. I have spliced plain built cane tops quite successfully.

It may be urged that the length of a two-joint rod is objectionable in travelling, but my experience has been that this so-called drawback is rather a safeguard, inasmuch as the rod has to be specially looked after and generally finds an unusually safe place in train, coach or motor.

One learns better to appreciate good rods after making a few one's self.

If funds are limited, spend the extra cost of steel centred over plain built cane, in a superior line or reel. Specially built tournament, whether English or American make, are seldom ideal fishing rods. Some of my inexperienced friends have handicapped themselves with second-hand heavy tournament rods; dear at any price for pleasurable sport.

When selecting a rod, it is always best to obtain the advice of an accomplished and experienced angler. Do not be content with an examination in the shop, but take two or three rods and try each with a suitable line. It is astonishing what unsuspected faults are discovered thus. Listen for any click as it bends and feel for any looseness of fittings and trace the cause.

Snake rings, after long trial, I have abandoned; they are apt to jamb the line in the acute V which they form with the rod. Strong upright rings are preferable, so are also the oval eyes fitted into snake rings, with which many firms now mount their best rods. The eye at rod tip and first ring from the reel are best lined with agate.

Most high-quality English rods are fitted with some description of lock joint. The best American rods usually have plain suction joints and I really cannot see the necessity for any other, providing that the ferrule and counter fit accurately. It is difficult to obtain in Australia first-class ferrules of the size required if repairing or making a rod; therefore, in the latter case, a plain splice is perhaps preferable. It can be fixed almost as quickly as a ferrule joint,

and, where one has one's rod together for many days, is less trouble and is always easy to undo, whereas ferrules sometimes stick and may ruin a rod. Of course, this joint can only apply to a solid wood rod. It is more fully described in the chapter on Rod Making.

One of my companions took a beautiful little 5oz. 9ft. greenheart rod to the Snowy, but found it wanting on such a stream.

There are, however, a few pretty little streamlets in our high altitudes, feeding the bigger rivers. They invite one to wander beside their courses away up the valleys into unfrequented country. Here, lightly accoutred with fairy wand, one could imagine one's self on some Devonshire Moorland beck; but as our Fisheries authorities in their wisdom have made one standard of 10 inches for our many rivers, the 4oz. troutlings plentiful therein, live on undisturbed except by cormorants, fish hawks and poachers.

THE LAUGHING EU-E-CUMBENE.

Thou wanderer! thou busy, laughing stream!
Born of the winter snows, by tempests blown,
Which stir thy springs to life, like childhood's dream,
Visioning larger worlds, as yet unknown.

Thy bubbling springs send tiny singing rills
To coyly hide in verdant, marshy ground;
They intermingle on the plains, where hills
Of mellow blue and foliage soft surround.

Thy gathered strength invades the mountain gorge,
Chanting with louder voice a joyous strain;
Thou roarest o'er rough rocks, as when a forge
Sets coals aglow and scatters golden rain.

Like wine, thy waters sparkle in a pool,
And swirl through gutters cut in rugged reef;
Sliding, with smoothèd face, o'er pebbles cool,
Where light and shadow play in strong relief.

In hollows deep, where dredges sought for gold,
And scattered rounded shingle stones, high heaped;
Where disappointed men, thy wealth untold
Of beauty, never saw, but left unreaped,

Thy quiet waters halt as though in pain.
With sorrow stricken mien pass slowly by;
Then quickening, they hasten on again;
Revived, they glisten 'neath a summer sky.

With turn and loop, thou wend'st through tussock plain,
With leap and ripple, 'neath a mountain, glide.
Oh, may thy waters purity retain!
Again I long to wander by thy side!

Oh! may thy charms for aye unsullied be,
So men, oppressed by cares of city strife,
May in thy presence find relief, and see
Pleasures that strew the quiet paths of life.

CHAPTER IX.—DRY FLY.

So far I have been dealing with what I may describe as the ordinary fly rod, one that is most suitable for our fishing, which may be likened to the North of England and Scotch fishing, in contradistinction to the South of England chalk stream dry fly fishing. We have no dry fly rivers of the English type, such as the Test, in Australia, though many of our streams have quiet waters where the dry fly enthusiast may ply his craft.

A rod for dry fly work must be built more stiffly than the ordinary fly rod, and as quick movement backwards and forwards is necessary to dry the fly in the air, more bindings should be put on to counteract the extra strain. The increased stiffness in build means extra weight and less yielding quality, which I have already objected to in general work, though the essence of dry fly fishing in relation to this should not be overlooked.

The dry fly purist as he has been somewhat facetiously termed (extremist would be a better word) may be deemed by some fastidious in his taste. But it is really all a question of degree; he regards the wet or sunk fly angler somewhat in the same light in which the wet fly man regards one who fishes with artificial minnow or natural bait, and anglers of the sink or swim (wet fly) methods are apt to compare the efficacy of their methods with those of the dry fly fisherman. The latter declines all comparisons and simply urges that he does not want to catch a quantity of fish, but that his sole object is to mark down the finest fish of the stream to try his skill on. With considerable justification, he claims that he thus preserves the smaller and immature fish. As he usually deals with the largest fish, his rod responds to their play in proportion, therefore, as the more supple rod bends to the smaller average of fish which necessarily come to the wet fly fisherman.

The purist's creed is to wait for the fish to rise before he begins to cast, and he finds as much pleasure in his own particular practice as he wants. He is generally, too, a man of a fair amount of leisure, who has fishing facilities at his command and so can choose his weather. The purist, however, does not monopolise all the dry fly work. Many of the disciples of the art who have to make the best of their

less favourable opportunities bring their lore and intuition regarding the habits of trout into play; if trout rings are absent, owing to dearth of natural flies, they cunningly dissemble with the floating artificial to such purpose as to cause an occasional fish to rise.

Taken to its ultimate issue, is this not, after all, the very highest skill to which fly fishing can be carried? Whether that be so or not, I know from my own experience on English streams, that there is an intense fascination in floating a fly over likely water and watching it sail along. The pleasure culminating in the event of a pair of lips suddenly appearing and the sucking under of the fly. It is more absorbing than paying attention to the rising fish only, and is often the only way to make a bag. One must be more alert to strike at the right moment on these particular occasions than on any other.

Dry fly work in Australia is easier than in England, where the atmosphere is often so moist that much trouble has to be taken in drying, oiling, and changing the fly to make it float. The climate of our trout stream country is so dry and the atmosphere usually so warm that in an average cast, especially if a long one, the fly is bereft of moisture so that it often floats without any special effort or application of oil. Provided one selects a good "floater," the troublesome oiling process is therefore unnecessary.

Medium and large red palmers or a coch-y-bonddu dressed with double hackles on hooks No. 3 to 7 are the safest flies to carry for both rainbow and brown trout dry fly work. A few ginger and other quills dressed on nothing less than O hooks are useful at times, especially just at sundown; but I remember I once had great success among the brown trout, one bright morning, with a stubby little fly with a thick, black body, black hackle and brown wing, perhaps a Welshman's button.

Sir Edward Grey says, "It is better to throw and float the wrong fly really well than to bungle the right one"; and the most expert dry fly angler I know says, "Give me any fly you like so long as it will float." The best brown trout I have caught took a huge floater made of the colours of the Belgian flag!

Both in wet and dry fly work, when approaching a fish from below, I never like to drop the fly right in front of the fish, but rather a little to one side and about level with its head, so that the gut is not so much in evidence.

CHAPTER X.—REELS AND NETS.

An exhaustive criticism on the divers makes of reels is unnecessary; the principles guiding the selection (apart from workmanship) are summed up in the general concensus of opinion that the fly rod reel, when filled with line, should be in proportion to the weight of the rod. It should balance the rod, resting across the finger at about nine inches above the reel seat. If it be too heavy, the tip of the rod will have its weight apparently diminished, being overbalanced, and therefore it will lose some of its driving power; if too light, it will leave the rod top heavy, slower of action and tiresome to wield.

For our climate, wooden Nottingham check reels are risky; if used they should be well varnished or oiled inside and out, but provided that one is lucky enough to obtain wood that will not warp, one has a good, useful article, but it must be fitted with a line guard. Two and a half to three and a half inches are the most useful sizes.

A great advantage of these reels is that they can be used for almost any description of rod fishing, whether fly work, spinning, beach casting, or boat fishing. The centre pin Nottingham is the best; it costs from ten to twenty shillings.

Having been victimised, however, on one or two occasions, through the wooden spool jambing, I advocate metal reels, and among inexpensive reels one cannot go wrong in selecting a good plain 2¾in. bronzed brass reel known as the "London" pattern. In no reel should the spool be less than one inch clear width inside; I favour one inch and a quarter. I have one of the best reels made, three and a quarter inches diameter with three-quarter spool; but unless one winds in carefully, the line is apt to pile up on one side or other and fall over, causing a jamb. The frequency of this is a constant source of annoyance; sometimes the line is injured before it can be got to work properly again. The maker has improved this pattern by increasing the width of the spool; a regulating check has some slight advantage.

Hardy's No. 2 Silex is suitable both for fly fishing, spinning and beach casting; for the latter, a specially strong spool is necessary.

A trout reel should be well filled with line. This may be regulated with the backing.

The Multiplier with crank handle is not likely to come into favour for our fly fishing, especially when shooting the line is adopted, as there is some risk of entanglement of line and handle; besides in forcing one's way through thick shrub, the projecting crank is more likely to catch than the simple, close-fitting handle of the English pattern. Multiplying gear, however, is often most desirable in tackling our fierce-fighting rainbow trout in order to keep a tight line. One has always to be on the look-out for a dash back right up to the angler, at all times difficult to cope with. Our rainbows often run out from 20 to 30 yards of line. I have had to follow a 1½lb. fish for 100 yards.

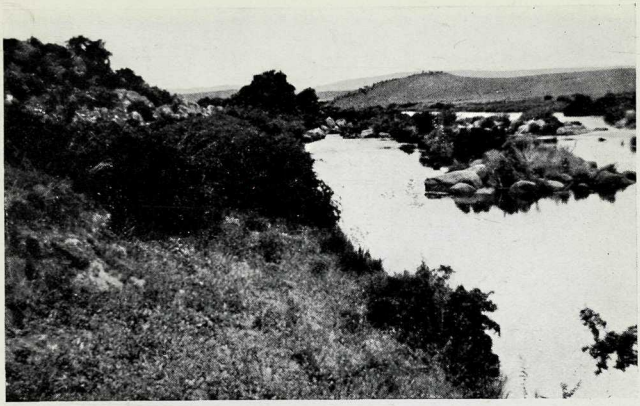
Be cautious how you select a reel of metal combined with vulcanite. If it takes your fancy, see that the vulcanite is well protected, or it is liable to break.

With these guiding principles for fly reels I leave the angler to follow his own judgment, adding the final warning not to be led into purchasing something new and expensive unless it is simple in action and has very marked advantages.

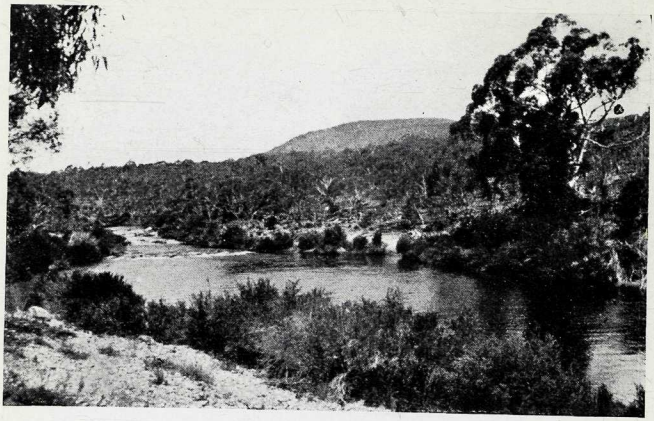
I have very decided opinion as to landing nets suitable for Australia. After many years' experience, I have come to the conclusion that nothing can come up to the Carter folding net. For our fishing, however, it should be specially made more strongly than usual.

The requirements are that the net and handle when extended, should be strong enough to be used as a wading staff, and also easily carried so as to give but little obstruction in getting through bushes. The staff may be from two feet six to three feet four inches long up to the knuckle joint, according to one's height, and of stiff bamboo or other suitable wood, shod with brass. Above the knuckle joint may be a further length of about 8in. of staff, on the top of which should be a screw or other joint so that the net can be detached for packing. The net ring is best of strong bent wood.

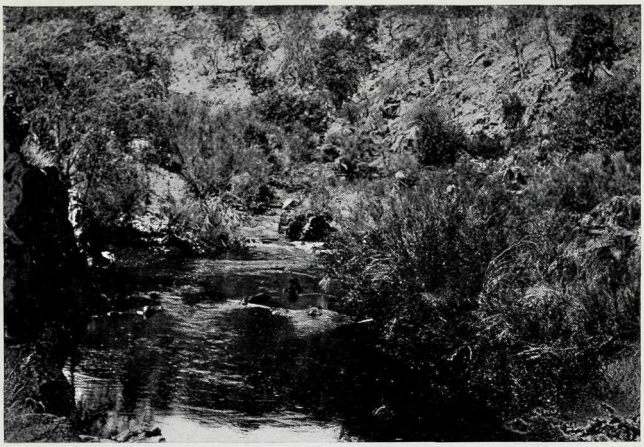
With this arrangement a useful wading staff is formed which, when folded, can be slipped into a ring or strap provided on the creel, or if a bag be used, it can be simply hooked over the bag strap. No separate metal hook should be placed on the staff for attachment; in rough country or rivers it is not sufficiently secure. With the simple tongued



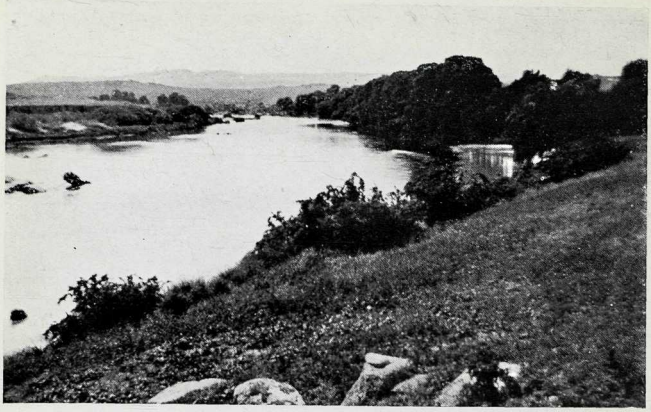
Near Buckley's Crossing.



Thredbo River.



Upper Queanbeyan River.



Snowy and Wullwye.

arrangement formed by the folding of the staff, it must be lifted very high before it will fall out of its place, an event which seldom happens in actual work. A wide joint admits of the two halves of the net hanging close and straight, whereas a narrow joint forces them apart at an angle causing one or other to entangle in one's legs.

A telescopic net is obviously of no use for wading, though otherwise it is the best procurable.

Carrying a spare rod-top in a net handle is a bad practice, as the inside may get damp and so ruin the top.

A bag is more convenient than a creel for travelling, taking up less room. Also it lies flatter to the side. On occasions it is really useful in helping to keep rain off when sheltering under our scant tree foliage.

Avoid rubber bags in a hot climate; fish will not keep in such close, strong-smelling material.

The best bag is one of two or three absolutely separate compartments hooked on to snap eyes on the strap—one large one for fish, one smaller for tackle, and perhaps one for lunch. Each can then be separately washed and easily turned inside out for cleaning.

CHAPTER XI.—MINNOW AND BAIT FISHING.

It has always been my endeavour, ever since it was proved that our trout would take the artificial fly, to discourage the use of any other lure. I think I may justly claim, through my example and teaching of many of my friends on the Monaro, and the prominent part I took in forming the Rod Fishers' Society of New South Wales, that I did more, in the early days of our trout fishing, to popularise the art of fly fishing in Australia than any other angler.

My chief object was that anglers should learn the delightful sport so that they in turn would be anxious to preserve and protect the fish until at least the rivers were well stocked.

In proportions to our numbers, I do not think that any country has fewer anglers who use minnows and baits.

Worming, as practised in the Old Country, is practically unknown here, partly because the rivers are not suitable and worms not so easily obtainable; also because worming has become so much a term of derision that no member of any of our Angling Clubs would like to be associated with it.

I do not favour grasshopper fishing because I cannot help classing those who indulge in it as wanting in the desire and enthusiasm to acquire the more artistic, fascinating, and, when mastered, usually more successful method of fly fishing. Yet when one considers that but few of us can snatch more than a couple of weeks away to the rivers each year, it is not surprising that the desire to feel a good fish on a rod does lead to the seductive grasshopper being used, should the fly not yield satisfactory results.

When, however, anglers who can take fish with a fly resort to bait fishing in order to capture an unnecessary number of fish, or adopt any other method so that they can make unnecessarily large bags, then righteous anger is aroused in the breast of the true sportsman. Though not likely to modify these views, I own that they may not appear to all to be reasonable, especially when one considers similar methods practised in the Old Country and actually advocated by some of the best sportsmen there. I allude to "creeper" (natural stone fly) and worm fishing. But when told, as we have been time after time, by some who are visiting the rivers that the fish will not take the artificial fly, and that it is useless to use anything but the hopper or ground bait, we

know from experience that the information is not correct. Provided that the water is in suitable condition, and weather not too unfavourable, our trout will always rise to the fly, properly presented, at some time of the day or other. Under these circumstances, I think it unnecessary to enter into details as to how to bait a hook, or to fish a stream with worm or hopper.

Artificial minnow fishing does require considerable skill and some special tackle. The rod should be stiffer, the line thinner, and reel free running. Standard minnows are the brown Devon, about one inch and a half long, and the Phantom in many varieties. Above all these, the fly spoon about half an inch long, is the handiest and easiest to carry and use. It has a single hook and is not so likely to injure or kill immature fish. I use this, however, only when fishing for the pot, on such occasions as when camping, owing to weather conditions, the fish are not rising to the fly. It can be cast with the fly rod as in fly fishing, but more time should be given in the back cast.

Real minnows or suitable small fish are not easily obtainable in our trout streams, so that Archer tackle or the like, i.e., mounts for live or dead baits, are useless. If any of my readers want a good, simple minnow, I recommend the Plano-Convex from Hearder Bros., of Plymouth. They do equally well for fresh or salt water.

Since writing the above I had occasion to use a Devon as the water was too dirty for fly fishing. After running about 30 fine fish and only hooking three, I concluded something was wrong, and on close observation I attributed the failure to the hard metal fans, warding off the fish from the hooks. I remedied this by cutting off the fans, removing the two treble hooks from the split ring in the centre and inserting a half moon-shaped piece of very thin pliable tin from the inside of a tobacco box, through the split ring, giving the necessary twist to cause the minnow to spin. Having removed the original fans it was then possible to fix two flying single hooks to lie against the head of the minnow, attached to the trace about two inches above the minnow. The light tin fans usually collapsed when a fish struck and the single hooks also did their work well. I think this rig much preferable to that of the ordinary Devon.

CHAPTER XII.—INDIGENOUS FISH AND FLY FISHING FOR PERCH (BASS).

Before proceeding to give hints on fly fishing for Perch it is necessary to allude to three or four indigenous fresh water fish which will take the fly. I briefly mention the so-called **Barramundi**, of Queensland, a Giant Perch. It is reputed to be an extremely game fish, attains the length of two or three feet and is of high quality as a food fish. Having no experience of this fish myself, I can only rely on the observation of a friend who has caught them. He bears out the above description and adds that the climate where they are caught is often such that it is almost impossible to see on account of perspiration running into one's eyes! Salmon or Mahseer tackle should be used. These fish possibly might, with advantage, be introduced into New South Wales.

The fresh water **Herring**, Mr. David Stead states, "abounds in all the rivers which flow into the waters of the east coast of Australia; with the exception, perhaps, of those in the North of Queensland." "It is a beautiful little fish when fresh, being, with the exception of a narrow greenish strip along the back, of a uniform silvery colour. It attains a length of about 9 inches." The average length is about 7 inches; with three small flies it is possible to hook as many fish at a cast or they may be caught with bait. The scales are very silvery and large. Along the belly is a row of hard, saw-like scales, arranged as a sheath for protection. This may be the reason for their being able to hold their own against Bass, which will not allow young trout to live with them. Herrings are easily cleaned and make a delicious fry, or may be boiled in vinegar, which softens the bones.

The Australian Grayling, according to Mr. Stead, "is a fine little fish, both from its value as a food, or viewed as a purely sporting fish. In Tasmania, where it is common, it is known by a multiplicity of names. By ichthyologists, following the classification of Cuvier, it would be referred to the Salmonidæ, the adipose dorsal fin being well marked." In the rivers of New South Wales it can hardly be stated to be common. In fact, it appears to be rare; I have never seen it caught.

PERCH (BASS)—PERCALATES FLUVIATILIS.

It was the late Mr. Dannevig, I am told, who first officially declared this fish to be distinct from the Estuary Perch. I believe I am right in saying that it was chiefly owing to the observation of Mr. C. F. Lindeman, one of our most ardent and skilful anglers, that led to the question of a difference being raised.

The two fish appear occasionally to overlap in the brackish tidal waters of our rivers; but the *Colonorum* will seldom rise to the fly, nor will it take, as far as I know, any artificial bait. Our perch somewhat resembles the English perch in shape, but is of a dull olive tint, the scales towards the belly becoming light and silvery yellow. Though not by any means as handsome or sporting a fish as the rainbow trout, as an edible fish, when in its best condition and matured, it is deemed by many to be superior, and is, in fact, one of the few fish I would angle for with the object of providing a special sop to the appetite! Owing to its habit of haunting the shade of fallen logs or overhanging banks and rocks and the like, which are plentiful in most of our coastal streams, it does not afford such sport for delicate tackle as is derived from the trout; but it is decidedly a game fish. Seeing that perch are obtainable within two or three hours of Sydney, and more plentifully up and down our coastal districts, the recent development of artificial fly fishing for them has popularised the sport.

Though the coastal midsummer heat is rather trying, in the late summer the rivers are beautiful and the climate all that is to be desired. Many of the streams are typical of trout waters, where one feels the charms and delights of the associations of trout fishing. The South Coast scenery reminds one of the best of Wales or Devonshire, whilst the palms and other luxuriant growth are almost tropical. Here it is a pleasure to wander, even should fishing be a secondary consideration. The North Coast is just as entrancing, the upper reaches of such rivers as the Manning, Hastings, Barrington and Macleay resembling the best of trout streams. Early morning and late evening are considered most favourable times for fishing for perch though, as a matter of fact, my best fish happen to have been taken in the afternoon.

Perch have a decided objection to sunlight, so that in bright weather one may expect to rise fish chiefly in a spot where a branch or log casts a shadow, even though in open water. One should try every shady shelter, no matter how narrow or close inshore; draw quickly over sunken branches and logs and take chances of being snagged. It will often be found that perch have refuges three or four feet under the banks among roots of trees. They seldom rise to the fly from the bottom of water more than three feet deep.

The beginner may at first find it not easy to rise the fish with a fly; he may have better luck with spoon, minnow, spinning fly or halcyon. Until he has abandoned all these, however, and adopted the fly only, he has not come into the full pleasure of perch fishing. The fly is the lure par excellence; it is much to be regretted that any other method should have any serious attention or encouragement excepting in chronically dirty waters. I speak not only from a sporting point of view, but as advocating the most successful method, excepting (at times) bait fishing, which does not come into my consideration.

Rainy weather is favourable if the wind be right, and a hot north wind, which blows the insects on to the water, sets the fish moving; but glaring weather, when the water seems lifeless, I do not like—days which seem uninteresting, monotonous and unsympathetic; such come to all anglers.

Perch do not feed on the top of the water after the manner of trout, for the reason that they disdain the small flies so attractive to trout, excepting when they are very young; then they will rise to white ants and such like delicacies.

The big ones rise generously at the artificial fly, like a flash, making the water boil, though seldom showing their heads above water. A perch which rises once and misses the fly will almost always come again repeatedly, and if apparently put down, may often be captured by the ruse of trying a quite different fly.

Many of our anglers advocate a large fly for a large fish, using large salmon flies—Jock Scott, Durham Ranger and the like. A smaller fly has its advantages, say small salmon or sea trout size, inasmuch as it is more easily cast and placed in odd nooks. Provided one can bring the fly under the notice of the fish, that is sufficient; the only reason for

using an abnormally large fly, say three inches long, is that it may more readily attract attention. With that object also, especially if the water be discoloured, it is sometimes best to sink the fly a little, but remember that it should then be drawn or set in motion and must be kept moving.

The flies I use are mostly of my own make, for it is no uncommon occurrence to lose half a dozen in a day's fishing, if one fishes the likely spots which endanger one's tackle. A large Peveril of the Peak, large palmers, turkey wings and red or black body; black and red body bound with tinsel and claret hackle with wings of mallard and pheasant tippet, all make good flies. One of the best is of brown and black 'possum's or seal's fur, body ribbed with silver twist, black hackle and black wings. An all-green fly kills well at times. The angler may use his own fancy; he will probably conclude, after a little experience, that buying salmon flies is an expensive game, and that as good and effective flies can be made at home.

The recent innovation of American methods of fishing for Bass, viz., with short casting rods and reels and spinning baits, does not appeal to me, nor is it as killing as the fly.

If one must depart from the use of the fly, owing to conditions of the water, the pleasantest and most successful substitute I have found to be an inch fly spoon. This has only a single hook and can be cast as a fly or sunk, with the addition of a little lead, and so used deep.

Of artificial minnows, the Devon is undoubtedly one of the best, but the usual pattern with the multiplicity of treble hooks is a clumsy, unsportsmanlike creation. A better pattern is that with only one treble hook at the tail.

The perch rod should be stiffer than the trout rod, so as to hold the fish hard and away from snags, etc. The cast need only be five feet and should be stout trout size. One must always be prepared to cope with a large, strong fish, up to four or five pounds weight, though an average of a pound would be a fair day's take. Fish under half a pound should be returned to the water.

The habits and movements of our perch are not yet fully known. I have caught them in heavy roe in October, November, March and April; whilst from August to December I have taken them in excellent condition free

from roe. In the Barnett and Barrington I found, in November, that they had young roe, about two months formed; in the Hastings they were in good condition in April. In the Shoalhaven and other rivers, perch may be caught in the head tidal waters with a spoon and fly at the same time and in the same water that bream, a salt water fish, bite at prawns.

A close season for perch in New South Wales, urged for many years by the New South Wales Rod Fishers' Society, has now been proclaimed. Whether this closure is at the right period or not, is viewed variously by anglers who have the best interest of the sport at heart. Some hold that September is the best season for the fly, and that in many rivers the fish are in good condition then, but the season does not open till November 1.

October is one of the pleasantest months of the year, corresponding as it does to June in England. Nature has awakened fully to the influence of the sun's warmth, and though it would be inappropriate to describe our season as leafy October, the feeling of approaching summer, with all its delightful associations of birds and flowers, which call us to the country, is in the air.

A difficulty is that in our vast region of New South Wales, conditions which exist in one district or river cannot apply appropriately to all, and with the present scant means of supervision available, it is impossible to differentiate between districts as is desirable. Yet it is questionable whether, from an economic point of view, it would not be better to open both the trout and bass season a month earlier. For, after all, the game fish are an asset to be profited by here, as in other countries; the tourist traffic and commercialism incidental to the sport of angling should be considered, provided the fish are sufficiently protected.

The estuary perch is considered by some authorities to be a distinct fish from the fresh water perch, and has been named *percalates conolorum;* others hold that the fish are identical, though varying according to environment. There certainly is a distinct difference in shape and in feeding habits; one should substitute live prawns for artificial baits if one would take perch from salt or brackish water.

Macquarie or Black Perch belong chiefly to the western waters flowing into the Darling, though it is also found in the upper waters of the Nepean and other rivers. It does not attain the maximum size of *P. fluviatilis*. It is a bottom feeder, though it will occasionally take a well-sunk Halcyon, and very rarely a trout fly on the surface. It cannot be classed as a game fish, though as a table fish is hardly to be excelled. Some of these fish were introduced into the Snowy River near Dalgety by Mr. D. G. Stead, at the instance of Mr. Alf. Rose, in the year 1911, an experiment which will be watched with interest. Many doubt the wisdom of the move, seeing that even though they may not be antagonistic to the trout, they probably will decrease the food supply, and thus tend to diminish the average weight of the former, though on the other hand the trout may feed on the young perch. These perch will not attract the tourist anglers, and as there are scarcely any residents on this portion of the river their introduction seems unnecessary.

The Golden Perch or Yellow-belly is a fine edible fish found only in streams running inland from the coastal range. It runs up to about six or eight pounds weight occasionally, averaging perhaps 1½ lbs. This fish and the Murray cod find their way to the shops, being netted by professional fishermen.

Murray Cod is a western water fish of the perch family; a fine table fish, weighing occasionally 100 lbs. and more. This and the golden perch are found in the same waters; many of the inland streams and billabongs (overflows from rivers) teem with them. They have great recuperative power after droughts, and may be caught with almost any kind of grub, worm, insect, or meat and the like. They will take an artificial metal bait or spoon, and put up a heavy fight on a rod. The usual weight is only a few pounds.

The Trout Cod Mr. Stead places as a species distinct from the Murray cod. It is a handsome fish resembling a well-grown Leven trout in colour, but heavier in build.

The above four fish are highly esteemed as table fish.

Strangely enough, the two latter fish do not feed well when the water is low and clear; in fact, they almost seem

to disappear. As soon as a flood comes they reappear and bite freely, and are to be caught readily by means of short lines on improvised rods or otherwise set along the banks. Inland waters become restocked after drought in a most mysterious manner.

Mullet.—The fish of this name found in many of our fresh water rivers, especially on the North Coast, is said to be the young of the Sea Mullet. It seldom appears to exceed two or three pounds in fresh water, where it is known as the Hard-gut Mullet. After migrating to the sea it attains a weight of over ten pounds. In fresh water it may be caught with worms or dough, and if a favourable spot be ground baited, a large number of the shoal may be taken. They are hard fighters and excellent sport. I do not speak from my own experience of these last five fish. Other of our fresh water fish are insignificant from an angler's standpoint, and need not be mentioned.

CHAPTER XIII. SALT WATER FISH.

The all-round angler who has the opportunity finds a perfect Paradise in parts of Australia—New South Wales in particular—and moreover at a cost much below that obtaining in other countries.

On our coast line of 700 miles are to be found as game fish, both large and small, as on any other shore. Whiting, Flounder, Tarwhine, Bream, Tailer, Snapper, Blackfish, Garfish, Mullet, Rock Cod, Flathead, Jewfish, Trevally, Groper, Mackerel, Sharks, Rays, and others of diverse names are all available in their times and places. Big game fish such as Tunny, Spanish Mackerel, Kingfish, Bonito, Barracouta, Sword Fish are captured in inlets and harbours within comparatively easy distance of Sydney, whilst north and south are many virgin waters for the rod man.

Though sport with one fish or another may be had all the year round, the best months are December to May.

BEACH FSHING.

The playing of a native Salmon (*Arripis Trutta*) on light tackle in the breakers caused by a lively north-easter breeze is most enjoyable sport. A fish of six to eight pounds weight on a trout rod with spinning top, fine silk line, and single gut casts, will tax all the angler's resources. On the beach they are usually caught with prawn or fish bait, whilst in the estuaries they may be taken with spoons or spinners from a launch, and if fine tackle be used, and a medium length rod, better sport may be derived than by using heavy tackle and a short rod. On the beach with such tackle as I use, I have frequently had to fight a salmon for an hour or more, following the fish for half a mile or so, with the salt waves breaking and swishing round my legs, whilst the quarry was working in and out, sometimes shaking its head on the top of a breaker one hundred and fifty yards away. That it is comparatively worthless when caught is compensated for by the pluckiness of the struggle it puts up.

Tailer may be caught in similar manner, up to about 10 lbs., but beware lest the razor-like jaws cut the tackle through. To prevent this some anglers sheathe the line with thin lead for a few inches above the hook or thread it

through quills. This fish when cooked is quite rich, but as it does not keep well in hot weather, it is not considered a good table fish. Fish bait, spoons, and spinners are required.

The Jewfish is another fish of uncertain size. It may pick up one's bait when beach or estuary fishing at any time, especially on moonlight nights. When they are known to be about it is well to have at least 300 yards of strong line on the reel, and even then one may take charge and make straight towards the South Pole, with perhaps 60 lbs. weight or more to back up its almost irresistible rush. One is lucky if the fish is under 35 lbs., giving a chance to bring him to shore successfully. A lump of mullet or other fish, prawns, or a live mullet about 6in. long, make good baits.

A great number of Jewfish are caught in the Hawkesbury, Shoalhaven, and other estuaries. They are not a choice table fish, and are best cooked in steaks.

Sea Bream, also known as Black bream, and Silver bream, averaging about 1½ lbs. and up to over four pounds, on fine tackle, give pretty sport, and are a handsome and good edible fish.

For the beach fish, one should search out the deep holes formed by a wash-out in the sand, and also the deep water where the waves break over a bank. If one has the chance, guide or cast the bait into an undertow and pay out line at every pull of the waves.

Bream fishing on the beaches at night, especially at the narrow entrances to salt water lakes, lagoons, or rivers, usually affords the best fishing, dark nights or a young moon and rising tides being perhaps the most favourable. See that your tackle is in good trim before setting out, your reel oiled and running freely, sinker about 1¼ oz., and line sound and free from any knots and kinks. It is annoying to have to give up when fish are hungry. One such occasion I remember. One Easter four of us started out about 8 p.m. and stationed ourselves at intervals along the shore, just where the tide was making along a narrow channel towards the river bar. After a time we began to feel the fish, the man furthest away getting them first, then the second, and so on. Two of the party got their tackle mixed up and had to give in. At one time when casting over the channel

to the far edge, where the sand was being churned up, our prawn was seized at every cast, and finally we finished with forty-four bream weighing fully eighty pounds. The moon rose as we were leaving off. Bream baits are prawns, worms, mullet, garfish, pippies, lobster and crabs.

Tarwhine resemble bream, and are fished for in similar manner. On the North Coast they run to two or three pounds' weight, and are esteemed more highly than the black bream as an article of food.

Sand Whiting fishing is nice sport when they are plentiful. Occasionally they run up to two or three pounds weight, and then are very plucky and stubborn fighters; a fair average is ¾ lb. Tackle may be as for bream. Some prefer a short single-handed rod and light multiplying reel, quite suitable for the calmer water which they frequent. Baits are pippies and beach worms (both easily obtainable on many of our beaches), also sand worms and prawns.

Trumpeter Whiting seldom exceed four ounces. They have shorter heads than sand whiting, and are marked with dark blotches. Use baits as for sand whiting. Small whiting give no sport on a rod, but are quite good fun on a light handline.

To catch beach worms, take a piece of fish or meat and swish it about in receding shallow wavelets. The worms pop their scaly heads out feeling for the bait. Mark the spot and hold the bait over same as the next wave recedes, when if careful one may induce the worm to take hold. Now is the time to seize the head with the fingers or bent pliers, but it requires practice to ensure success. Small ones 12 inches or so may be whipped out easily, but a five-footer requires some coaxing. Pippies are shellfish which come to the surface of the sand, or may be found a few inches below it at about half-tide. One has usually to go a mile or two away from frequented places to get them.

Barracoota and Hairtails are of the same family, and are both fishes of prey and have keen teeth, necessitating wire traces. The former are often found in Sydney Harbour, the latter, however, being occasional visitors only. At Jerusalem Bay, Cowan Creek, they were fairly plentiful in 1914. They are a weird fish, looking, when first caught,

like a brightly burnished sword, and as they often approach the floating bait vertically and slowly, their gradual appearance is most uncanny. When landed in the boat they will snap at anything, so beware.

Groper and Drummer.—The former are heavily-built fish attaining a weight of thirty pounds and more. For the rodman one of a tenth of that weight requires some handling. A stout bamboo pole and very strong line and hook must be used, and when the fish takes hold it is a matter of "pull devil, pull baker." Groper live under overhanging rocks in the estuaries and on the coast. Baits are crabs and cunjevoi, a species of sea anemone, found on the rocks at low tide.

The Drummer has similar habits, but is more like a blackfish and, like that fish, is fond of the rock cabbage. It does not run as large as the Groper.

Trevally are somewhat like bream in their habits, and are caught on the beaches and in the harbours with the same baits. A two-pounder puts up a very dogged fight. They run up to seven or eight pounds.

Flathead, chiefly found in the estuaries; when over four or five pounds give fair sport on a rod. I have caught them over nine pounds, but they reach 15 lbs. and more occasionally. They will often take a spinning bait; other baits as for bream.

LEDGERING AND DRIFTING.

Comparatively little real "ledgering" is done by anglers in New South Wales; why, it is difficult to understand, seeing that so many waters are suitable. I have only met two or three men who are keen enough to make a success of it. As in other branches of the sport, there are many details to be observed in order to gain a satisfactory result. A knowledge of the habits and haunts of fish, change of tides, proper kellicking of boats, patience and quietness, are essential. Two men are enough and three too many, unless they are all first-class anglers and well mated; otherwise, there will be too much restlessness, both in selecting position of boat and in the boat itself. The boat must be kept steady, tightly moored with two ropes, one on shore and another well out

from the bows, in such a position that the tide takes the bait into the position one wishes to fish. As a general guide one may select the edge of the eddies forming below points round which the tide runs, and a change must be made with the tide. Possibly at the change no eddy may form on the other side of the point, and another position must be sought. The young flood is generally the best.

Two men can easily manage four rods unless the sport be very furious. A 10ft. rod is suitable, such as is used on the beach; the sinker is 1 oz. or more according to the tide, and a yard of gut below it. One No. 1.0 hook for bream, jewfish, &c., or two smaller hooks if whiting are about and the bottom sandy and clean, though hooks of course should be varied according to circumstances. A line of plaited or twisted undressed silk, say 60 yards No. 16 silk twist on a strong backing of not less than 100 yards, should be wound on a reel of centre pin Nottingham type, 3in. in diameter. Each man should have a net and be independent of the other in outfit, so that no time be lost should the fish come suddenly on the bite, as they frequently do with a change of tide. The tackle described above is suitable for drifting, though a short single-handed casting rod and multiplying gear may be preferred, especially as smaller fish are usually taken on a drift, such as whiting, flounder, and flathead. Don't take out a mate who has not perfect command of his rod in casting, or who persists in swinging heavy lumps of lead on a handline or wants to move because you are catching fish and he is not.

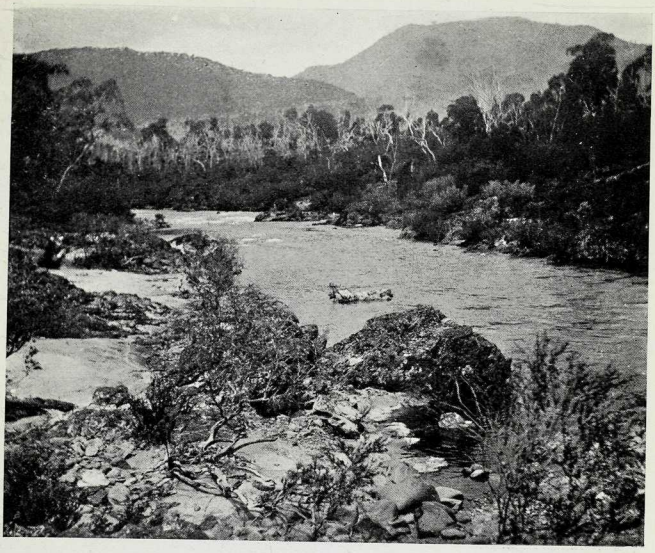
CHAPTER XIV. FLOAT FISHING.

Many are the degrees between the float watcher and the dry fly purist, yet there are niceties in the art of the former which, if skilfully attended to, bring it into some relationship with the latter, so that it is not uncommon to find the trout fishermen unusually keen and successful in both of these branches of angling.

Some of us who have indulged in English roach, chub, and bream fishing, with quill float, fine tackle and stiff bamboo rod, find a resemblance in the methods here adopted to take blackfish, with this exception, that the latter demand stronger tackle, the English fish not comparing with the Australian in regard to fighting qualifications.

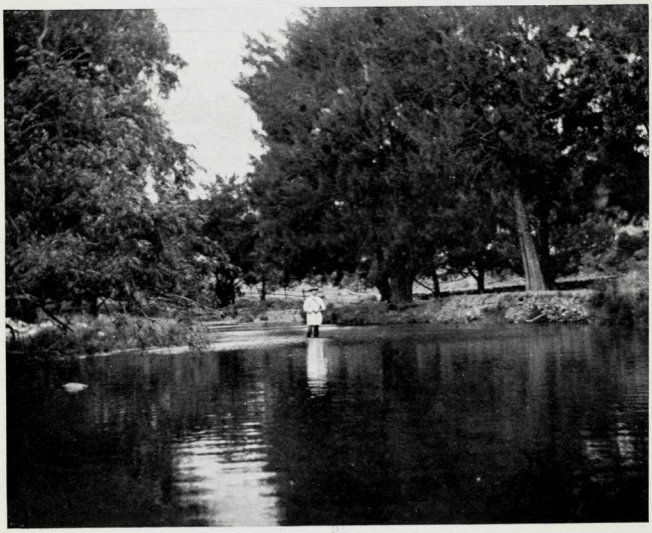
Blackfish (Ludrick, Vic.), though till late years somewhat despised, chiefly on account of their strong flavour and smell, have now become *facile princeps* as a sporting fish for the floatist. The change of opinion has been brought about chiefly by the discovery that the strong flavour is entirely eliminated if the skin and backbone are removed, the sides being filletted. In cleaning, the head and belly should be cut off, the knife passed down on each side of the back fin and the skin torn off. This treatment is particularly advisable, as frequently the flesh is pierced by soft white parasites.

The haunts of this fish contribute to its popularity, for it may be located as high as the tidal waters follow the estuaries, as well as on the sea coast, and from its habits of keeping close to the shore is easily reached with an ordinary rod. It is gregarious in habit, moving from one feeding ground to another, according to the condition of the tide. During winter months it is to be found near the entrance to the inlets. It appears to return in numbers to the upper waters about October, in such places as the Hawkesbury, Middle Harbour, and Cowan Creek, where the larger fish remain till May. Small fish and an odd large one may be taken in any of their haunts all the year round. They are seldom caught on full tides, but bite freely from half tide, through the ebb till the first hour of the flow, especially at neap-tides; thus they fill up a gap when other fish do not feed well.



Tumut River.

The Author beach fishing.



Under the Casuarinas.

The most popular bait is a fine green weed, a kind of sea grass, which grows on piles or piers round wharves, also a bright green weed known as cabbage which grows on the rocks. Occasionally they bite well at prawns and cunjevoi.

In the estuaries where the tide strikes against the rocks bordering a hole varying from six to twelve feet deep or more, and swirls along forming eddies between boulders, is favourite water; or on the coast in clear deeps along the rocky nooks or even in the foam as it swirls round an obstacle.

For estuary waters I prefer a stiff light bamboo rod, tip well over the float so that with a short tight line one may quickly feel the fish should the float be taken under. Anglers miss fish after fish through using short and pliant rods, necessitating a lot of slack line and hard striking. The float should be a porcupine quill passed through a small pear-shaped cork, which should slip off so as to thread the line through, in place of the usual quill collar.

It is handy to have a few separate corks, so that an additional one or two may be slipped on should more lead be required in strong current. Two or three feet of gut-cast are required, fine near the hook, which should be about No. 3, strong, fine, and sharp.

Place a shot or two a couple of inches above the hook. If higher, the fish may lift the bait without indicating a bite on the float. In good humour, blackfish bite eagerly; at other times, especially at slack water, they need a lot of pampering. Never make the weed drag against tide and so look unnatural to the fish. This in fact is most important in all bait fishing. An angler's motto should be "no resistance"; that is, all baits should be allowed to swim with the tide, or, as in ledgering, lie perfectly still on the bottom.

Green weed should be put on so as to hide the hook; remember that it floats up when in the water. Take a thin piece about 3 inches long, lay it along the hook so that half an inch hangs below it; wind it two or three times above the eye, then down and over the front of the hook and over the barb two or three times. If too tight it will not spread in the water, and if too loose it will be taken off without the fish being hooked, therefore adopt the happy medium.

Another method of fishing is required on the coast, or where it is necessary to fish far off. Then a stiffish casting rod, say 10ft., and weighted running float are used, the tackle being heavier and stronger.

In the clear water of the harbours near rocks, black fish will take bread on the surface, with a vigorous dash, in a similar manner to which perch take the fly. With a float weighted so that it may be cast and a couple of feet of gut beyond, bait with a small piece of tough bread. Use a No. 4 hook, and let the bait float. Large fish frequently succumb to this lure. It is well to have weed handy in case they prefer it.

At such spots as the weed flats at Cowan, they become scattered when the tide is up, and may be seen with their noses stirring up the mud like bulging trout. As soon as the flats are becoming exposed the fish congregate where the shallow water runs into deep. Here the boat should be kellicked, bow and stern along the shore, and the float thrown well out, the bait a foot or so from the bottom and allowed to follow the stream. A landing net is very necessary; on the coast a very long handle is needed.

Garfish and Mullet.—For both these fish it will be found best to use a small sharp hook, bound with silk and wax to the gut as it is very important to hide completely the metal in a ball of paste about the size of a pea.

Blackfish and mullet are ideal for the "contemplative man"; he may fish from the shore or tie up his boat alongside the rocks or weeds in some quiet spot shaded by the overhanging gum trees and watch the change of light and shade as the sun wanes. In the late autumn the evenings are usually calm and clear, and wonderful reflections of sky and shore are cast in the quiet bends. Sandflies and mosquitoes, troublesome in the summer, are now quiescent.

Occasionally trevally, flathead, and the troublesome, though toothsome leather jacket, will take either weed or paste, and I have augmented my basket at times with a black bream or two on the latter.

Float fishing for black bream with prawns requires much skill and knowledge of the habits of the fish. In the early winter the fish often are found feeding along the shores of

the Hawkesbury, Shoalhaven, and such places. A rod not less than 15 feet should be used and fine gut casts with but little sinker. Plenty of berley is needed, of such consistency that it will sink and gradually break up. The bait is cast well out up stream and allowed to sink gradually and follow the tide; no float is used. Berley is a ground bait made of bran, pollard, and old herring or other strong-smelling stuff.

The reel and gear must be strong and in good running order, for fish up to 3 or 4 lbs. may be hooked, and then it is a tussle to keep them out of the rocks and oyster shells. Many anglers use no float for this style of fishing, but depend upon feeling the bites. The young flood and full tide are best.

Black bream fishing in the estuaries is to salt water angling as trout fishing is to the fresh water angler. It is an art in itself and well worth special study, not only for the rod, but for hand lining. The angler who wishes to become an adept at the latter should get an old hand to initiate him into the mysteries; much quietness, observance, self restraint and patience are absolutely necessary. Clumsiness and impetuosity are fatal to success.

GAME FISH.

Fishing for game fish has caught on in New South Wales and doubtless will attract many Australians and visitors in the near future. Tunny, Spanish mackerel, kingfish, and swordfish, visit our estuaries in numbers late in the summer, and may be taken by trolling a garfish. Very few artificial baits are much good.

Short, strong rods are used, cutty hunk lines, and specially built reels. This tackle can be now obtained in Sydney or New Zealand.

At Port Stephens boatmen cater for this sport, and in Sydney Harbour, Broken Bay, and National Park, at times fair sport may be had.

About Easter shoals of kingfish invade the upper water of Cowan Creek, and may be seen leaping and dashing among shoals of garfish they have followed. I have never succeeded in getting them to look at an artificial spinner. Fresh or live garfish should be tried. The water is most ideal. I have no doubt but that it will someday prove a favourite resort for sport of this kind.

CHAPTER XV. TACKLE MAKING—RODS.

To those who are of a mechanical turn of mind the winter months may be well occupied in making and repairing rods, nets, reels, tying flies, and doing odds and ends incidental to the sport.

Even if this work be not taken up seriously, it is good to dabble in, in order to gain some knowledge of how to do a little repairing in an emergency, and so save a few hours when on the stream. It has often been my pleasure to re-ferrule or splice a rod for a mate when in trouble, through some accident, or to tie a fly to a particular pattern. There are neither skilled rod-builders nor fly-tiers in Australia, though simple repairs may be managed after a fashion.

Experimenting with timbers for rod fishing, I have used imported greenheart and lancewood as well as native iron-bark, blackbutt, spotted gum, mountain ash, and other woods. Of these greenheart is the easiest to work and, if of good quality and straight in the grain, is the most reliable.

Blackbutt makes good lower and middle joints, but should not be used for tops, being too brittle and subject to worm holes. It is steely and light, and works up prettily. Iron-bark also is suitable for lower and middle joints; even for stout tops, and would probably do well for "game fish" rods. The best and one of the most easily obtainable of our timbers is spotted gum, equally suitable for sea or fly rods. An un-limited supply is available, but it requires careful selection and seasoning. The last three timbers are of the eucalyptus family.

Mountain ash is light and whippy; if steamed would make good net frames. When possible, it is, of course, best to split the timbers for joints, but provided the grain, on care-ful examination, be found to be straight, no harm can be done if sawn parallel with the fibre. Any pieces with short cross grain or a knot must be discarded or used only for the butt.

Two of my rods I managed to rough out of spotted gum in nine feet lengths without a flaw, these I afterwards cut in two, giving 5 feet for the top and 4 feet for the lower joint to which I attached a twenty-inch handle.

Some amateurs turn the lower two joints in a lathe, and this is possible, at least to cut them down to approximately the correct dimension. I prefer, however, to adopt the professional method of working down by plane, leaving an inch or so at one end for cutting off after shaping. Do not hold the wood against an end stop, but drill two holes at right angles at the butt end and pass this over a wire nail driven in the bench; then plane from the fixed end; the joint may buckle and break if worked the opposite way. Use a six inch plane for finishing and keep it very sharp.

Some experience is required in different woods to determine the proper thickness, and here book rule can only be taken to be approximate, as each piece of timber varies in elasticity. It is best therefore to fit the joints roughly together with splices or ferrules from time to time as the work proceeds. Be very careful when fining down, one false step or undue haste may ruin the rod in a second.

Another very important point to observe is that few timbers, Australian particularly, bend equally in each direction; if you hold the tip against some point where it can be revolved and bend the rod and turn it completely round in the hand, you will observe that the bend takes different forms at almost each movement. Now comes the fine work, reducing the rod by a little here and there to counteract uneven bending; it will be almost impossible to make it exactly even. You must determine the best side for the rings, and this really can only be settled finally by temporarily fitting on the reel rings and line and a good deal of trial casting and bending.

In shaping down the joints, first work them square, diminish them as required, it may be from half an inch to one-eighth in ten feet. Carefully test with calipers every few inches to see that the sides of the square are equal. In doing all this, watch any warp in the timber; if the grain will admit, cut out the warp in the early stages. A grain running completely across, in length not more than three inches, may be strengthened by binding, but it is best avoided. If on planing one way, parts of the wood pick up or tear, the planing must be reversed at that particular spot. When the joints have been worked down to square, bend the pin (a

wire nail with the head off will do) over to an angle of 45 degrees. Slip the pin through the holes in the butt, laying the joint anglewise along the bench, and with the small steel plane work the angles off gradually, so as to reduce the square to an octagon. Observe the eight faces in doing this, and see that they are of equal widths and their faces equally diminished and tapered throughout.

From the octagon, convert to a round, either with the plane or a glass scraper. Finish off with medium and fine glass paper, and finally give as much polish as you can with wood shavings.

I have lately adopted the plan of leaving the lower two joints octagonal, the angles being just sandpapered off. Rounding may be done with steel scrapers cut to desired size with round files. Should the joints, in spite of all care, develop warps, they may be taken out to some extent by heating before a fire.

Get on a thin coat of oil or varnish as quickly as possible, put the rod together and hang it up from the tip. Two or three coats should be applied, rubbing down with fine glass paper between each coat, before the fittings are permanently fixed and two or three coats after, well coating at bindings. Use only best elastic carriage varnish, keeping it air-tight except what little is poured out to use. Do not touch the rod after varnishing between each coat till dry, as the natural grease of the hand will delay setting. Should the varnish become at all thick, thin down with a little turpentine.

A splice makes a very much better jointing than a ferrule for a fly rod, especially for the upper joints. It enables one to put a little more bulk into the wood, and so at the same time ensure a trifle lighter rod and more even action than if a metal ferrule be used. This can be easily proved by experimenting first with the splice alone, and then slipping over the splice a ferrule approximating the size which would be required. It is most interesting to note what a remarkable difference the ferrule makes. The rod is at once top heavy and far too pliant; it would be necessary to considerably increase the stiffness and bulk of the lower joint to counteract this.

Should it be decided to adopt a splice, the ends must be cut diagonally as true as possible, about three or three and a half inches long, fitted with the small plane, and finished off by rubbing down on a sheet of fine glass paper laid level on a hard flat surface. Put the joints together overlapping about a quarter of an inch at each end. Cut off the overlap and round off and finish with sandpaper. This will give a slightly increased thickness and strength at the splice to counteract any tendency otherwise. The splice will thus be slightly oval in section.

Of course it will be seen that the delicate ends of the splice are likely to be injured, therefore it is advisable to drill two holes in a piece of wood a little larger and longer than the splice, with funnel shaped mouths, as a guard. Sew this into the end of the rod case so that it may not be lost. This is a good tip for any rod stops.

Many spliced rods have bands of metal bound on at the thick end of the splice to take the thin end of the other joint. These may be made out of ordinary ferrules, cut wedge shape. Wrap the splice, when putting the rod together, with medium waxed silk, rubbing a little wax on the flat surface of the joints. Bind with long spiral wrappings from end to end of splice first, then proceed to bind more closely, not necessarily very evenly. It takes very little more time than putting ferrules together, and has one advantage that there is no sticking, whereas with ferrules it is desirable to loosen them every day.

There are three ways of finishing the butt, one is to work it on the bottom joint, which is more handy in a three joint than a two joint rod. Another is to work the bottom joint to the full length desired and drill the centre out of corks with a sharpened ferrule, and fit the corks carefully with sand paper, filing and sandpapering to the desired shape; the third and easiest way is to attach the butt with ferrules. For practical purposes this is the handiest, as the butt or reel seat may be then carried detached in one's bag, thus shortening the rest of the rod. Also the butt may be fitted with a ferrule at each end and reel fitting adjustable, so arranged that it may be reversible with different sized ferrules at each end, fitting two rods. A wood or rubber button

may be fitted to either ferrule. Ferrules and cork handles may be attached with Page's glue or heated resin. Choose dry, hot weather for this work if possible, or well dry and shrink the end of the joint over a fire before fixing the ferrule which also should be well heated. A pin should never be driven in through the ferrule of a fly rod. Ferrules may be of various lock fast patterns, but if good plain suction ferrules are obtainable, truly fitted, they are much the easiest to fix and seldom give any trouble. If not having split ends they may be easily cut so with a file. The reel rings should not be more than one inch diameter for ordinary rods. Fit the rod with agate bridge rings for the first ring, and agate tip ring, the remainder being either oval-eyed snake rings or upright. Snake rings are likely to result in a jam in the V they form on the rod. Bind the rings on with waxed silk. For method of binding see page of details.

Be very neat in the binding, jamming the silk close with some hard substance, such as a knife handle; roll it over and over till well flattened out. Be careful not to fray the silk. Use one-third beeswax and two-third shoemaker's wax melted together.

A fly rod should be bound with silk from top to butt, the bindings being graduated from ½ inch apart at top to about 2 inches apart at the butt, though it should be noted that if the thicker joints are sound fewer bindings are advisable. The binding, however, must be a matter of judgment, always remembering that the object is to prevent a fracture in cross grain of the wood, and not to stiffen the rod. In fact, silk bindings do not permanently stiffen rods at all, but add weight, and therefore tend to make the rod more pliant. It stands to reason the more weight is applied to a rod, the less power of resilience the wood can exert.

Three turns round at most are enough for the top bindings. The silk should be slipped under the previous turn at the finish, pulled tight, and cut off neatly. The varnish must be depended upon to fix the bindings. White silk used without wax becomes transparent when varnished.

Fly rods should have rings spaced approximately as follows:—The first ring five inches below tip, and each succeeding ring one inch more than previous one. Beach cast-

ing and boat rods should have as few rings as possible and of porcelain or agate, especially for top and butt ring. Spacing may be twice as far apart as to fly rods.

As a guide the dimensions of a beach casting rod of spotted gum may be as follows:—Length, 10 feet; bottom joint, five-eighth inch at butt, diminishing to three-sixteenth at tip. This will cast 1½ oz. lead and bait combined. A fly rod of the same length should taper from about ½ inch to one-tenth. It should be remembered that the suppleness of the rod must be determined by the weight it is desired to cast, and that to obtain the pleasantest results, the proportion of bend of the rod by its efficacy to play the fish, must be considered equally with the casting power of the rod.

CHAPTER XVI.—FLY TYING.

In fly-making one must adopt a considerable amount of conventionality. The highest art of the decorative designer is not to copy nature closely, but to adapt its forms and colours for his own use. So it should be with fly-making. The beginner nearly always starts out to show old hands how much better he can make flies—so much nearer to the natural object, and he worries round to find new materials, and strives to make exact copies of insects of all shapes and sizes. He generally ends in making grotesque monstrosities.

It is doubtless quite possible to imitate nature more closely than the ordinary artificial fly does, by using such materials as rubber for the body, gauze for wings and fine wire for legs. But an artificial fly must serve more requirements than that of looking like a fly. It must be light so that it will fall softly on the water if required, the body must be easily and cheaply made, the legs must possess the quality of retaining their shape and position though pliant, the wings must have sufficient toughness to stand hard usage, and the whole must resist becoming sodden. It must be capable of holding enough air to keep the hook and the whole fly from sinking too quickly, and, on occasion, to float. The colours must be fast, preferably natural colours.

Years of experiments by thousands of anglers have produced nothing better than feathers for wings and legs. But one never sees an insect with a bunch of legs all round his body. Natural flies' wings are mostly semi-transparent. Bodies are never enveloped in bushy, curly hair and tinsel, nor is a natural fly ever provided with a large single metal eye, or yet a protruding steel back bone. Thus it will be seen that the ordinary artificial fly, if examined critically, is not very like the real insect but is only a conventional representation. Nature having endowed trout with the spirit of inquisitiveness and the power of digesting any kind of insect, they will mouth and test almost anything in the water having the semblance of food. One has only to cater for this trait in the making of a tempting bait for trout.

One typically conventional fly is tied in a manner known as "buzz," that is, an insect such as a beetle, which, on account of its weight, has to move its wings rapidly, as the propeller of an aeroplane, in contra distinction to a May fly or dun which, being lighter in build, moves its wings much more slowly. This "buzz" is represented by a well-known hackle fly such as the coch-y-bonddu (meaning, in Welsh, red with a black butt), and, really, the effect produced may seem more natural to the trout than a winged fly, especially when one considers that the fish doubtless often sees the fly approaching. This, I am satisfied, occurs from the fact that it is not uncommon for a trout to leap out of the water and take the artificial fly in the air or immediately it touches the water, though no fish may have been seen near the surface, showing that the trout has moved up in the water anticipating the alighting of the fly.

I proved the sharp-sightedness of fish once, experimenting with mullet. Having previously seen them taking white ants off the salt water, I cast a fine line and small fly towards them. Before the fly had got within three yards of them they all scattered, and this happened so repeatedly that I was convinced they were scared at the sight of the gut. Now a fly-tied "buzz" would on its approach to the water appear more natural to the fish than a fly with stationary wings. This is then an artistic and conventional treatment of a buzzing fly.

There is another matter of interest in relation to fly-tying. It is well-known that one of Nature's provisions, a cruel one it may seem to us, is that wounded or disabled things in insect, bird or animal life are often pounced upon by their own or other kind and killed. I have sometimes seen an artificial fly taken in preference to a natural fly, and it has occurred to me that the reason has been that the artificial has presented itself to the fish as a disabled insect and more easily caught, or as arousing curiosity through it not appearing quite natural. The "spent gnat" (wrongly so termed) is really an intentional representation of a disabled fly.

Nondescript or fancy flies are often more natural than one imagines. I have frequently made up a fancy fly and afterwards discovered a natural insect like it.

There are sundry devices for fly and tackle making of which one should beware; many of them are devices of the devil, calculated only to induce one to waste money which would be much better spent in an extra trip or so. The most useful parts of an angler's outfit are a small half-round file, small pointed scissors, and "Fishing Gazette" pliers. If points of these are ground finer and a flatted metal ring or wire slipped tightly on the handles, an impromptu vice to hold the hook is formed. After placing the hook, slip on the ring, the hook may be held firmly by jamming the ring slightly diagonally. The screwdriver handle can then be wedged in a block of wood. Unless you are making very small dry flies, however, and they are best bought, such aids are unnecessary, and fingers and thumb should suffice.

The illustrations are large so as to be clear, and directions are as follows:—

FLY ON GUT.

1. Rub wax on the shank of the hook and on the tying silk to keep body from slipping round.
2. Hold the hook in left hand by the bend, place the gut—rolled as shown—along the straight of the hook, the gut having been bitten slightly to give it a better hold.
3. Commence about an eighth of an inch from the top and whip silk down the hook, tie in tail, then hitch silk between gut and hook so that it will not untwist when it is laid on the table.
4. Prepare hackle by cutting and stripping as shown. Unhitch silk, tie in hackle securely and hitch silk.
5. Prepare body material, seal fur, etc., by rubbing a small portion between palms of the hand. Unhitch silk and spin in with the body; wrap round and up hook to within about ⅛ inch of top. Fasten with one or two turns and half hitch.
6. Take body hackle, tied in at tail, and wind up over body, then tie in.
7. Tie in second hackle firmly, then wind hackle closely round a few times, hold back hackle with left hand, take

hold of hackle spine with right hand, pinching it with finger nails close up to hook. Take three or four turns of silk with left hand, then change hands and make fastening by passing silk through a loop of itself, and finish off with three loops.

8. Take feather for wings, cut out portion as in sketch; if not naturally even, work it as square as possible between thumbs and fingers, divide in centre with point of scissors, re-knit feather by rubbing edges together so as to make wings fairly even; double over wings and place on hook with right hand.

9. Nip firmly with thumb and finger of left hand. Pass silk round butt of wing feathers; close on butt and silk with finger and thumb and hold tight, pull silk down firmly, wrap round two or three times and fasten with three loops. Varnish head and leave to dry. The fly described, if tied all brown or with a grey-green body, will represent a caddis fly or sedge.

If tying fly on eyed hook a short piece of gut tied in (see 2) is useful as a wedge to be cut off when the fly is finished, but a half hitch at the end of each tying section will do as a substitute.

The simplest fly, such as the coch-y-bonddu is made of processes 1, 5 and 7, the dubbing being two or three peacock herls instead of fur. Substitute for or addition to hackle, may be gold or silver tinsel.

A hackle fly has no wings.

A quill has a body of the centre of a large feather fibre scraped clean, such as that from a peacock herl. A quill has three tails, a thin body and hackle with or without wings. The more delicate flies are dressed in this manner and represent the ephemeridae, *i.e.,* flies which emerge from lavae or nymphs as they rise to the surface of the water after many years' life in the mud. A day or two after hatching into may flies or duns, they again change from the first stage sub-imago, to imago or spinners, by shedding their skin and wings, etc. After they have laid their eggs in the water, they become "spent," and artificials are very killing if dressed to represent that condition—that is with wings spread out.

For years past I have experimented with wings and have found that the best wing for a spinner is a clear, shiny, small hackle tip, those known as blue or grizzled being the most natural. Use right and left feathers in this case.

In addition to the ephemeridae, the flies most useful to anglers in Australia are Hymenoptera, *i.e.*, wasp-waisted flies, such as ants and wasps, from which I have taken the "orange wasp"; "Trichoptera" or caddis fly; "Coleoptera," beetles, such as the "tea-tree"; "Orthoptera," grass-hoppers, such as "bredbo," "hopper hackle," "Joseland's fancy," etc.

Those who wish to pursue further the fascinating study of entomology in relation to angling, are referred to such charming works as *Halford's Entomology* and West's *Natural Trout Fly and its Imitation.* For more elaboration of fly dressing, refer to McClelland's *Fly Dressers' Cabinet.*

Sufficient directions have been given here, coupled with description of material to enable an apt scholar to work out any description of trout or perch fly for himself.

To make a neat fly it is imperative to have fine tying silk, which is easiest procured by unravelling and using a strand of fine sewing silk. Flies must be tied firmly or they will come to pieces, so that the utmost strain, short of breaking, must be applied.

An indication of materials is as follows:—

Body.—Fur of seal, possum and hare; wool, quill, raffia grass, &c.

Wings.—Starling, gill bird, bustard, land rail, domestic fowl, hackles, golden pheasant crest, mallard, runner duck, wild duck, teal, turkey.

Hackles.—Neck feathers of domestic fowls, all colours; partridge breast, land rail, golden pheasant, gill bird, starling.

Wax.—As described for rod binding, or resin dissolved in turpentine and kept in a lead tube as moist water colours are.

Local anglers will doubtless be able, as they gain experience, to add to this list:—

Wet flies are tied with wings set so that they will easily enter the water and have less hackle than dry flies.

Flies may be made dry or floating by using long tails, extra hackle feathers, and wings put on upright by passing

the silk or hackle between them crossways; but some have a light quill body in place of fur.

To make a spent fly, tie somewhat scantily with long hackle, then press the hackle flat and bind crossways with silk, or tie in hackle tips in like manner, or tie an ordinary hackle and cut out superfluous hackles on top and underneath.

To make a floating palmer, prepare the hackles as at 4, but do not strip either side. Tie in the thick end of the hackle at the eye of the hook, with the butt down the bend. Wind towards the bend as closely as possible, holding the tip of the hackle. Tie up rather lightly, then with thumb and finger nails sqeeze hackle up to eye; next, tie in two more evenly matched hackles as before. Tie in body fur and intertwine with silk, and wind down shank and fasten. Now take the two hackles by the tips together, and wind down shank and fasten off. Do not cut off the tips, they help to float the fly.

The body fur may be almost any colour, black, claret, or yellow for preference. After completing the formation of the fly, prick out the fur a little. This will tend to make the fly fall more softly and to keep it afloat. Flies tied thus on different sized hooks are the most useful dry flies that can be made, and a Chinaman's feather duster will furnish a season's hackles.

CHAPTER XVII. RODS AND TACKLE FOR SALT WATER FISHING.

To be properly equipped, the angler should have the following rods:—One of light, stiff cane 14 feet, changeable to about 10ft. 6in. by means of a separate butt with reversible handle, for shore fishing. One stronger split cane or greenheart, 8ft. to 11ft. long for beach fishing, Hardy's Murdoch being ideal; or a much less expensive greenheart costing say 30/- will answer.

Also a heavy one-joint rod of greenheart, spotted gum or built cane, with detachable butt for big game fish, about 7ft. total length. For boat fishing any of the shorter rods may be used.

I have a most useful general rod which I converted from a 12ft. split cane fly rod. To the top and middle joint I have fitted a short butt. This makes an excellent light and powerful fly rod. The lower two joints with a short top form a beach rod, and the middle joint with short top and short butt are handy for boat work. A combination rod of this description is ideal for general work in Australia.

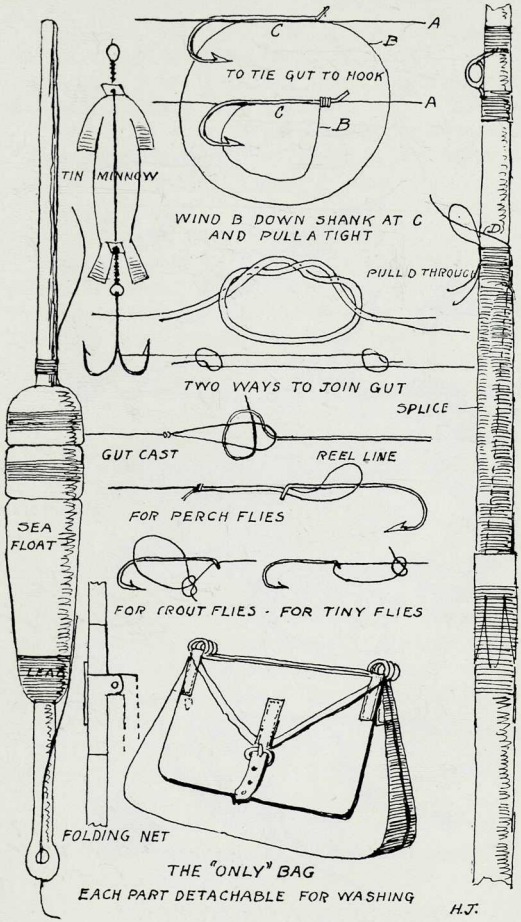
For light work in smooth water the single handed casting rod does good work, but in a rough break and where an occasional large fish may hook on, the longer rods are better tools.

Any free running reel of the Nottingham centre pin type if kept in good order and well oiled is suitable; preferably without guard, so that an over run may be more easily negotiated. Some anglers find it difficult to cast from a revolving reel, therefore prefer the Malloch, on which the drum is turned round crosswise when discharging the line.

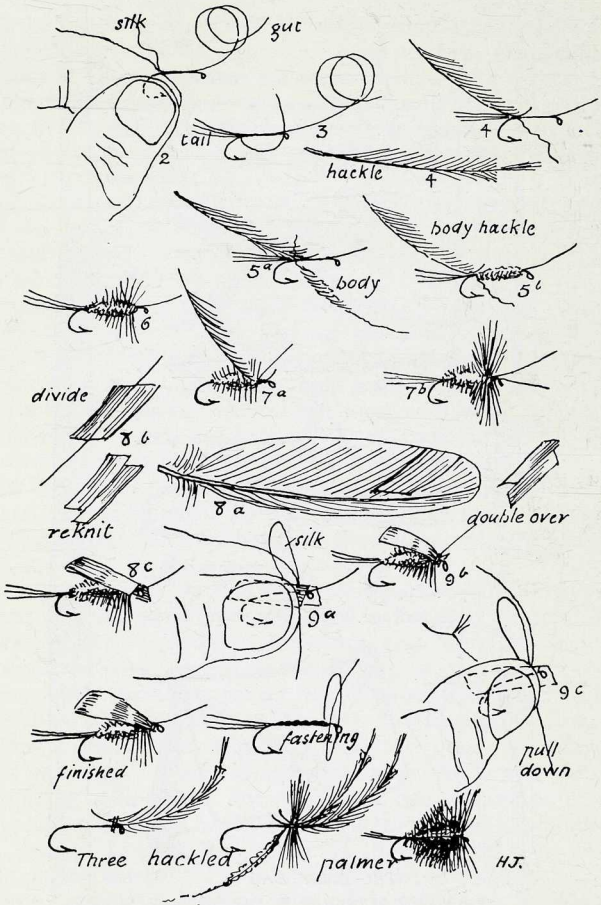
Many American multiplying reels are good and have "pros and cons," which comparison with the simple non-multiplying will reveal, but they have one advantage that a controlling drag can be fitted to regulate the pull in pounds.

A dressed Lincoln line is one of the best and most reliable on the market. Linen threads make good lines.

Some dressings rot lines. A good dressing may be made of two parts of Stockholm tar, one of raw linseed oil, and one of paraffin wax melted together and applied hot.



Rods and Tackle.



·HOW TO TIE A FLY BY HAND·

Silk twists of varying thicknesses cast well, but do not last, especially if not dried after using. Gut lines have recently come into favour. America sends us some first-class enamelled salt water lines. For beach work the reel should contain at least two hundred yards.

The sinkers I use are boat shape leads, with a lead tag at the end, which I bore and turn up. Thus there is no hole to get filled up with sand as in the ordinary sinkers, and if one does not want to use it as a running sinker the holes can be pinched together after the line has been threaded. A weight of from one to two ounces will usually be found sufficient, with the weight of the bait added.

If there is plenty of room it is inmaterial whether one uses the side swing or overhead cast, but one should cultivate the latter so as not to interfere with other anglers where there are a number at work together.

Here it may be of interest to note that the first beach casting off the reel from New South Wales beaches was done by H. B. Joseland, T. Owen and myself about 1900, at Tuggerah Lakes entrance. We used cheap greenheart rods and Nottingham reels, costing about five shillings, and silk twists. The sport we had then was just as good as I have ever had since with tackle costing ten times as much.

In some countries a float is used in the breakers, and though I have never seen it adopted here, for tailer and salmon, I think it would be worth trying.

On an incoming tide a cast of thirty to forty yards will usually suffice to get on to bream. Jewfish, tailer and salmon generally lie a little further out. With an ebb tide one requires a longer cast. Look out for undertows, and work your bait so that it is carried out with the current. I like mine to travel; some men like to anchor their bait.

New South Wales is rich in beautiful beaches—quite safe to fish off—as the tide rises slowly, on an average about four feet in six hours. A medium north-east break is good for beach fishing; a westerly off the land makes a calm sea with but little break to stir up food, so fish keep out.

THE MONARCH.

Do you remember, Sam, one summer day
Tramping o'er rolling plain and rocky knolls,
Leaving the township and following calls
Dame Nature made us, to hasten away?

Under the clear sky, inhaling the breeze
(Winds of Monaro bring youth to our cheeks)
We carried our rods, not brassies and cleeks;
Do you remember the scent of the trees?

'Neath the rough slopes, there the stream sparkled bright,
Rushing and gurgling and singing with joy,
Laughing at play like a boisterous boy;
There seemed no wrong on earth, all things seemed right.

You wandered down the stream, I went above,
We met at our lunch, comparing our bags;
Mine was so nice and plump, yours limp as rags;
Fickle Dame Fortune had shown you no love.

You bade me fish where you'd fished all the morn;
I couldn't go wrong; why, they rushed at my fly!
And they scattered at yours; oh, goodness knows why!
How my reel sang as the line off was torn.

Do you remember, how late in the day,
When you were ahead and perched on a rock,
You nearly fell in; a trout caused a shock
With a splash at your feet, whilst I far away.

Played him in fear at the end of my line.
We laughed! how we laughed! the fish took a rise
Out of you, my dear Sam; it was a surprise.
Yes, your luck was out, the Dame smiled on mine.

Do you remember, Jose, one summer day,
When Nature was sweet as a merry young lass,
The flowers were nodding amid the long grass,
And wild birds were piping—melodious lay.

How, where Boloko joins the big river,
We crawled o'er the reefs with perilous tread,
Or cast underneath the bushes instead,
For trout that sought flies (or perhaps rabbit's liver)?

At lunchtime you drew a sprat from your creel,
A queer little fish whose spots had gone wrong;
I, in mock modesty, uttered no song
But just lay "the Monarch" alongside your reel.

CHAPTER XVIII. ENGLAND REVISITED.

Rip Van Winkle's experiences, awaking after twenty years, seemed to me as a boy to be supernatural. A visit to England after a longer period, if not supernatural is strange indeed, not devoid of sorrow as well as pleasure. To find some old friends utterly changed, out of touch and hardly to be recognised, others away in the happy hunting grounds, is as depressing as dreary, cloudy weather. To find a few mellowed only, and some come to full vigour of man and womanhood, brings a glow over one as of the warm, bright sunshine of Australia.

And so it was with the old fishing haunts where I had graduated in the sport. The old school tuck shop, on the banks of a Hertfordshire stream, where we cooked the poached trout, had given place to a terrace in a new suburb whose station had displaced the home of my rival school artist of forty years ago. The sleepy hollow was transformed into a London suburb. How small the old mill stream looked, around which so many recollections of adventures had clustered. Nearby was the old copse, where I was caught by the game-keeper just as I had robbed (unknown to him) the wild duck's nest, and just at hand, by a strange coincidence, the same owner of the farm, not walking sturdily, but carried in his trap, was following the haymakers. Near where my chum and I had caught several perch from the canal, was an extensive disused gravel pit filled with water, which an unfortunate cockney angler told me was his club water. Fine roach fishing I remember not so far away at Harefield Mills and pike fishing close at hand, within two or three miles of the scene of my exploits on the Chess.

By motor, as many haunts on Worcerstershire and Herefordshire streams were passed in one afternoon as had taken me years to explore; but a few days' fishing on these and on Devonshire and Welsh streams enabled me to renew my acquaintance with them and enjoy the miniature beauties of little rivers, and to study the wealth of wild flowers and charms in a few yards of English hedgerows, which the average motorist passes by.

The first day on the Monnow we returned all the troutlings as being undersized, but to our surprise, in the evening found that in comparison to those brought in we had been discarding fair fish, for that stream; our next day's bag was declared a good one.

In some preserved water near Brecon the May flies were dancing fairy flights over their erstwhile abode, enticing the trout to relieve them of the degradation of becoming spent gnats, though many trout became spent in my basket; one greedy little chap was so gorged that, unhooked, he came rolling over and over down a stickle and so into my net.

Some delightful days spent with companions on Welsh streams, and the Lugg and Usk. The latter, though yielding insignificant trout, taught me more about dry fly fishing.

Let not my Australian friends think the foregoing typical of the best fishing in England. The best is very good, and may be compared to anything our streams can yield, but is not easily obtainable.

But what of the other side of fishing! The thrushes sang in choruses everywhere, the cuckoo called the real call, not the parody cry of the Australian representatives. Dozens of larks soared from Devonshire meadows filling the air with their trills. The cottage gardens bloomed as they have done for hundreds of years with roses, tiger lilies, foxgloves, scented geraniums, mignonette and a lot of other marvels of the Creator.

"One looked all rose trees, and another wore
A close set robe of jasmine sown with stars;
This had a rosy sea of gilliflowers
About it; this a milky way on earth,
Like visions in the northern dreamer's heavens,
A lily avenue climbing to the door;
One, almost to the martin haunted eaves,
A summer burial deep in hollyhocks:
Each its own charm."—TENNYSON.

The Devonshire beach trees outclassed all others, including oaks and elms, for grace, but all foliage vied in making the English country side the most beautiful on earth.

It was quaint to see the average attempt at surf fishing on the English coast in 1907. Out of a dozen anglers, where I fished for bass, only one or two had an idea of the game and tackle required. One man cast with check on, which grew feebler and feebler, hour by hour, and day after day, till it "floated away into silence."

I stayed a night at Nepigon on my return through Canada. This was once among the best of Canadian waters, but the angler must have several days at his disposal to visit the upper waters in a canoe with guides and outfit.

A fair number of fish were rising in the fine river near the town, which only after several hours' delay I found was free fishing, so that I had but little time to wet a line and land a wee representative of *Salmo Salvelinus,* formerly known as *Salmo Fontinalis.*

With Canada's rivers, lakes and dashing mountain streams I was charmed. Beautiful views one sees from the iron road, pools and dark pines mellowed by evening light, like one sees in pictures, and just as calm and still.

There are streamlets with transparent moss green and amber waters, gem-like in purity, leaping under the bridges and viaducts and joining the turmoil of the milky Frazer River flowing between brown, grey and red capped crags down in the gorges.

Along the river the eye catches patches of rich salmon colour on wooden frames; these are the fish split open and out in the sun to dry, and nearby is a fisherman methodically scooping, scooping, scooping with a large hand net, and occasionally, very occasionally lifting a struggling salmon from eddying waters behind jutting rocks.

There are harmonies of grey, pearl and pink in the clouds, waters, and flowers of Lake Superior to contrast with awesome mountain peaks of the Rockies and Selkirks.

On close inspection of this feast of beauty one renews acquaintance with old friends, for familiar flowers grow wild, such as gaillardias, columbines, michaelmas daisies and golden rod, whilst the quaint "Indian pipe" reminds one of an Australian orchid.

Jack pines, maples and spreading poplars fill the forests, the last named bearing the legend, doubtless of French

origin, that the sighing and shivering of the leaves of this tree originated when the wood was used for The Cross.

Space of the prairies, space of the mountains, impress and fascinate one, but not more so than the cordial goodwill and open heartedness of the people, especially towards Australians.

The average tourist does not fish at Banff, and if he did, unless things are changed, he would not catch much. Possibly it does not pay to cater for anglers, else why are not the beautiful rivers there well stocked? In answer to enquiries as to fishing, I was referred to the head porter at the hotel, of whom, with a certain amount of angling "side" I asked what fly to use. His reply before an extensive audience was somewhat disconcerting: "Oh, I use raw beef!" came out very pat. Strange to say, I came across a similar recommendation from a guide in a book of thirty years before; so that it must be a standard diet in Canada. Nevertheless, both at Banff and the head of the lake at Laggen, I grassed a few of the beautiful native trout and white fish, finding a small Farlow's March brown as good as raw beef.

Next, Duncans, where the Cowichan River is so clear that one can hardly see the water, gave me an afternoon's excellent fishing, if not many fish, for one has to make one's self almost as invisible as the water is. The Indians were setting a kind of wickerwork trap in the shallows between the pools in anticipation of the annual fresh, when the salmon and trout "run" to Cowichan Lake.

The hotel at Duncans on the Cowichan is a restful place, set in a pretty little garden, and it has the advantage, as in many C.P.R. hotels, but denied to most Australian hotels, of having its bar secluded.

Cowichan Bay, a few miles away, is like the Hawkesbury River, near Sydney. At a quiet hotel at the bay I spent a day or two. The Indians fish for salmon from canoes and light boats, trolling a large spoon bait on a stout hand-line held over the arm as they paddle. I went out at daybreak, a beautiful rosy haze clothing the water with mystery. The Indians could be heard paddling their craft to the best water a mile or two away, just on the edge of the bank formed by

the debris from the river. The tide was making as the sunshine strengthened and lifted the mist. The Indians could then be seen, twenty or thirty of them, paddling backwards and forwards; occasionally one would stop to haul in a salmon, bash it on the head, and throw it in the boat like any old fish. Round about, a fish occasionally rose and rolled on the surface like a porpoise. Whilst watching one old warrior hauling in a fish, the while laughing at me with my rod and tackle, I had a run, and in time duly landed my first salmon, almost 18 lbs. weight. Two forty-pounders were landed that morning, and one boy's bag was eleven salmon before 9 a.m. I was offered the standard price, 50 cents, for mine; but preferred to give it to a tattered old Scotchman, who was so astonished that I did not want anything in return, that he went down the road still muttering to himself about it.

On returning to Wahroonga, Sydney, in October, apart from the home coming, what delighted me most was the marvellously fresh atmosphere and sunshine, so clear that it seemed almost artificial. The Australian blue sea and yellow sands eclipsed anything I had seen elsewhere. Truly, one is privileged to live in such a beauty spot as Sydney, and as a jumping-off place for sport for the angler it ranks high.

My friends told me that the first Fly Fishing Tournament in Australia was about to be held. On my way out to the event at Centennial Park, a few days later, I heard for the first time in Sydney an English lark. That is the pleasantest recollection I have of a casting tournament; all others in connection therewith may fade from my memory without regret. The competitive element is quite foreign to my ideas of angling as a recreation from exactions of business.

"HAUDREY."

Haudrey's lot had been cast in a charming valley near one of the most delightful of old Herefordshire villages.

My friend, who rented a mile of the fishing, costing seventy pounds per annum, was rightly rapturous about the rich woodland scenery. Nature could hardly have made a stream more fitting to its surroundings. Its volume was

respectable, and it was busy all the way through green meadows, under trees and bushes, making runs and stickles, slow and fast, eddying at bends, and now gathering up its weight as though to burst away the weirs and flood gates, placed to divert its force for the use of mills since mediaeval times; or to afford depths in which trout appeared to lie year in and year out, for the sole object of at least one annual good feed of "May flies," after which they would retire to private life for eleven months or so.

The village of "A." consisted chiefly of a few picturesque cottages of weather stained bricks and alternate black oak framing and white plaster, and the ancient stone church with its square tower, clock face, simple traceried and mullioned windows, old oak roof showing its massive timbers, and old rude screen cunningly carved and framed by some forgotten craftsman of five hundred years ago.

The vicarage, an unpretentious quiet building of Georgian date, nestled nearby, almost under the shade of the church tower.

The parson had the right—religiously guarded—of fishing some hundred yards of bye stream which fed the mill.

Trim cut hedges, rich pasture meadows, and here and there a shapely sycamore or oak bordered the well kept straight highway, which, from the little standpoint of the incident itself, seemed to have been expressly made for the landlord's neat little dog-cart, sent to convey us to the ancient inn. This was situated directly on the road, and close to the aged and massive stone bridge over the trout stream. Brightly coloured flower gardens fronted all the cottages, to make up the lack of which the inn cultivated climbing roses and yellow jasmine.

The inn was so well kept that it might have been a private shooting box, and the landlady a very model to suit the surroundings. At the back of the inn rose a steep hill, on which, half-way up, was a large bowling green, formed by cutting into the hill and banking up in front. Its long disuse was evident by the condition of the grass, but that it had been formed centuries ago was shown by the size of the old fir trees growing on its border, if not by the date of the archi-

tecture of the inn. Its attraction now was the lovely view across the valley.

Immediately in front were the inn orchard and kitchen garden, backed by the rich colouring of the old buildings; further on between the trees, one caught a glimpse of the well defined hedgerows of the road, and the silver stream flowing under the double arches of the quaint old hump-backed bridge, then the river again; over the bridge, and beyond to the left, beautiful lawns and garden foliage of the local manor house. The valley stretched a quarter of a mile on either side of the stream, all green with pasturage and foliage, and right facing, to back the whole, was a lovely range of wooded hills. In all the pride of English scenery, the most beautiful of its kind on earth, there were few such jewels as this. Some may say, "what has this to do with fishing?" It has all to do with fishing. The true angler is a lover of nature, whether its appreciation be conscious or undefined to him.

"Haudrey" had chosen a more secluded but none the less beautiful haunt, and to reach it we had to drive some three miles over a round-about country road to another bridge higher up the stream.

We had been granted a day's fishing on this preserve, and, of course, we had to use flies only, and dry flies at that; therefore the little bag of red worms I found dangling from my friend's coat button must have been a pure accident, whether for his or my benefit I never discovered.

I must confess to some comfort, however, when unable to rise a fish in spite of a garrulous game-keeper's advice, I discovered on an overhanging bush a glittering silver Devon minnow. Knowing that trout in that stream fed only on dry flies, I reasoned that perhaps it had been placed there as an ornament, so gave it to the keeper for his infant to play with.

Leaving this melancholy scene I moved to other waters, whilst the keeper of trout and dry flies interspersing his conversation with the whole details of his family history, and the brilliant virtues of himself, set on a background of the blackness of his relatives, revealed to me the secret of the brook—the haunt of "Haudrey." "We wants to get 'im

out, sir, 'e drives away the other fish, 'e lies in a pool above the bridge, sir." Taking me there, he continued: " 'E's under this 'ere bank or under that over'angin' tree and 'e's a monster full two pound. 'E's been there two years, sir, and 'is Lordship nor no one else can't catch 'im; there 'e is, sir, under that there tree, just as I was a sayin"; and, sure enough, "e" was distinctly visible, lying motionless in an eddy, head down stream.

The bank was high and treacherous above him, and a straight cast impossible.

With humble feelings that if neither his Lordship nor anyone else could deceive him, it was presumptuous of me, from Australia, to make the attempt, but that it would be no disgrace if I failed, I sought a safe footing on the bank behind the tree and cast a yellow dun. Though it fell light the position was not good; my second venture placed the fly so that it floated into the monarch's sight. I saw my trout slowly and deliberately back under the fly, then rise lazily—the dun disappeared.

Almost trembling, I struck; the fly did not come back, but instead the line cut the water in the direction of the main stream.

My garrulous friend burst forth into a perfect torrent of comments, and a lady standing on the bridge below told my companion that I had hold of a large fish. Though, feeling that my reputation was at stake, my greatest trouble at the time was to calm the keeper sufficiently to enable him to use the net rationally, and I had continually to check him in his essays to dash the net at the fish. Finally I ordered him to quietly hold it under water whilst gradually I coaxed my fish out of the stream, and led him round with the eddy and so over the net.

"That's the big fish, sir," said the keeper when he had him safely lying on the grass. "I'm glad 'is Lordship didn't get 'im, I don't take no account of 'is Lordship, sir, 'e can't fish." Of course this last remark was a clencher, so I sordidly exchanged half a crown for "Haudrey." But why "Haudrey?" It was thus:—Rewarded for our virtue of the previous day in that we went to the church, we had received from the Vicarage, an invitation to tea.—Not being sure,

from the signature, whether it came from the rector or his wife, we consulted the maid at the inn, who, after reference to the landlady, vouchsafed the information that the initials were those of the rector's wife, "Haudrey Hemma." As a fitting commemoration of the event we therefore christened the handsome lady trout, as it proved to be, "Haudrey."

A SUMMER DAY.

'Tis summer noon, and o'er the dull red earth,
Of wind-swept hill crest of Monaro's downs,
In the calm air, hovers shimmering heat;
On distant mountain chain of Crackenback,
So softly blending in horizon far,
The drifted snow lies nestling pure and white,
And 'neath kind summer's melting touch, distils
Life-giving drops as bright as diamonds.
Scarcely the ripening stalks of grass now move,
Faint purple tinted on the nearer slopes,
Or straw-like seeming where wild barley grows;
Whilst mingled, as though thrown by spirit hands
In glee, here sparsely, plentifully there,
Rivalling heaven's blue, are sweet star flowers,
Beautiful and frail, braving fierce heat;
But the evening primrose droops and fades,
Till the night tempered air its form revives,
On river verge the willow pennants hang,
Nor stirs a leaf, nor through them sighs a breeze.
The water still and smooth, with polished face
Reflects the rocks, the trees, in perfect form;
The live translucent falls are coloured bright
With amethyst, brown sand, and greenery,
And ever-changing rainbow tints of spray.
There in the Snowy River's ample stream
Irideus shelters 'neath a jutting rock
Which hides him from the sight of enemies;
Whilst, sucking in the doomed and drownèd flies,
The lazy brown trout round slow eddies swims.
On wooded hillside, gums show green and red
And gold, as sunshine permeates their leaves.
The red bark glows on crooked, wind-bent bole
And twisted branch. Within a shadow scant
Of stunted trees, where in the far-off days
The kangaroo and wallaby held sway,
Meek, silent sheep pant for the cool sea breeze.
When soft winds blow from out the sultry North,
They saturate the air with the warm scent

Of Eucalyptus leaves and festooned bark;
Of modest blooms of plains, and flowering shrubs.
The great sun, on the unjust and the just
Doth shine; so noxious weeds do flourish in
Its heat, and to extenuate their faults,
Contribute beauty to the summer scene.
Sorrel, with rusty red, clothes barren ground;
Briars, their fragrance give, and roses pink;
Thistles, brave purple flowers some, yellow others;
But yet one, all dwarfed and clothed
With spiteful spikes and thorny leaves and flowers,
Shows pretty blue throughout from stem to bud.
What sounds fill midday heat and zephyr warm?
Cicadas drum in cadence shrill; hoppers
With intermittent turn their fiddles scrape;
Hawks loudly call from mate to mate. The birds
To drowsy rest have gone in sheltered nooks,
And insects, undisturbed, but faintly hum!
The glad sound of Snowy's running water
For ever dominates the heated air.

THE CHRISTMAS MOON.

A little tent, set on a strand of clean granite sand traceried with roots of the trees which spread overhead; in front of the tent soft green grass, and a few tufts of rushes fringe the broad, quiet water of the river pool. On the far side, tea-tree bushes overhang the water, casting dark shadows, and further on are sombre river pines, through which the Christmas moon shows golden as she rises through the network of branches.

Only a little while before, in the darkness of the background towards the rugged hills behind, intensified by the light of our camp fire, a pair of gleaming gems, almost startling in their brightness and seeming isolation, had mysteriously and silently appeared. Presently, however, they moved slightly, and assumed, as it seemed to us, a look of innocent inquiry. Then the rock wallaby, owner of the glistening eyes, resumed its nocturnal wanderings, and left me and my companion alone; though had we eyes to see, other timorous creatures of the bush may have been revealed.

The "wanes of air," as they played up and down the mouth of the gorge, brought alternately sounds of the busy rapids at the foot of the pool, or the swish and the roar of the Snowy River, as its cataracts tore past granite boulders above us.

Our evening meal over, we burnt the unused fragments, for it is sacrilegious to disfigure such spots with camp litter. Then, when the moon had flooded the vale with silver light, and turned the cloudlets above into swan's-down, we took our rods and made our way up the river strand, over bleached flood wood and rocky spurs, till we reached a jutting point where the water slowly carried flecks of white foam circling round an eddy.

The moonlight danced in streaks and patches on the dark waters, where, out in the middle of the river a lively stream curled and swirled, then died away into the still pool. Whilst we intently watched, presently trout rings circled and circled till they, too, merged into the mosaic of the moon's reflected light.

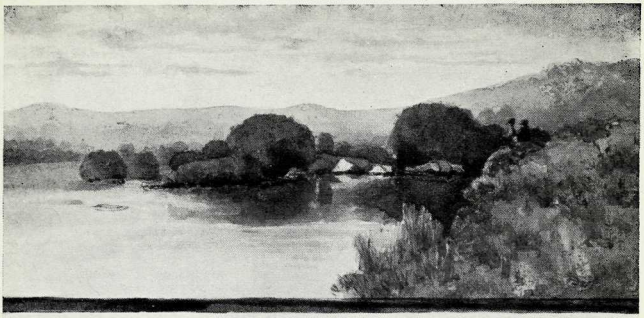
No response had come to our flies in this water during the daytime, and, indeed, the circles were too remote to reach; but a break in the eddy near by encouraged us to throw a fly. At once a strain on my line showed that I had not cast in vain, for soon a fario was lifted in the net. Another cast or two was responded to more vigorously, the song of the reel telling us that a rainbow had been hooked. The brace was all we wanted for our breakfast, so we returned to our tent and lay down on beds of soft manuka branches, with the scent of candle bark from the camp fire to bring on drowsy rest and sleep.

Now and again a curlew uttered its weird, searching call in the quiet air, and once the wind sported with us during the night. Mustering a little extra vigour, it brought noises of the cataract down the valley loudly to our ears. Alarmed at the prospect of a freshet from Kosciusco's snow-tipped heights, and only half-awake, we gazed on the wavelets encroaching up to our door; gradually it dawned on us, however, that the wavelets were only of dry sand, on which quivered shadows of the sparse gum-tree branches above.

To wake in the night and gaze on the labyrinth of light and shade, cast by Christmas moon, was almost as delightful as to sleep. To wake in the clean, crisp Monaro air as the sun rose was as a draught from the fountain of life to the oblivion of the vanished night.

Familiar notes of the thrush brought recollections of many happy fishing days, for the grey thrush is an angler's companion on many gully-streams and river-ways of Australia. As the day grew, noisy parrots flew across the river, showing their bright blue and crimson feathers against the sombre tones of the forest. Honeyeaters of olive-green and yellow were actively searching for their food; wattle-birds called like English cock pheasants; and from the dry hill slopes came the lovely mellow notes of the Australian magpie.

The blue smoke of our fire curled up through the branches in the free air as we prepared our breakfast. Our meal over, we parted for a morning's fishing—one to try the rough, unfished waters in the rocky gorge, the other to work down the gentler ripples below, where the river throws off streams round islets, or winds past undulating shores and level



JUST IN THE AFTERGLOW, THAT DUBIOUS LIGHT,
BETWEEN THE CLOSE OF DAY, AND BIRTH OF NIGHT,
WHEN ZEPHYRS SOFTLY BLOW, AND SOFTER BLOW,
AND ROSE TINTS SOFTLY GLOW, AND SOFTER GLOW,
WHEN MOONRISE PALES THE LIGHT WITH PALLID BEAM,
AND WATERS EDDY NEATH A FADING GLEAM,
WHEN "DUNS" AND "SPINNERS" FRAIL ARE ALL ABOUT,
AND IN THEIR FLIGHT ENTICE A LUSTY TROUT,
WHICH SEIZES ON ITS PREY WITH SUDDEN SWIRL,
THAT LEAVES EXTENDING RING AND WATER WHIRL,
THEN FALLS MY "GINGER QUILL", MY FLOATING QUILL,
AND PRAYERFULLY I BID MY HEART BE STILL.

WHEN COMES A SMASH, I HURL A WORD,—NOT LAMB!
THREE POUNDER LOST, AN ESTIMATE, BY SAM.

HOWARD JOSELAND · DALGETY · JAN · 1917 ·

Ludlow Castle.

shingle beds. Where the water lingered in a quiet stretch between rapids, a wild duck fluttered away, disturbed by my approach, but the island, chosen for its brood rearing, was too overgrown, and I too busy with other things, to search out its nest.

In one pool a loud rise behind me brought anticipation of bigger game; preparing for a fight, I cast into the disturbed water. Just at that moment silently appeared, on the other side of the stream, a floating object like a piece of brown wood, then suddenly it rounded its back and dived. It was not the first time I had been deceived by a platypus.

Brushing against the soft-branched tea-tree bushes, now decked in summer's enrichment of May-like blossom, the hum of insects broke into louder tones. Some beetles fell into the stream, to make repasts for expectant trout basking near. A bracken-clock counterfeit deceived many a fish, and in the course of the morning my creel began to assume a fair weight; but apart from the catching of fish, the joy of wading knee-deep in smooth, broad glides of a clean, murmuring river in the glorious, exhilarating air, dropping a fly far and near, left no room for any other feeling than that of pure, simple pleasure.

The sun was past its highest before I had covered a half-mile of river, and I was loth to leave a stream, the peer of which I have never seen in my wanderings; but it was pleasant to retrace the river-bends under the shade of the graceful manna gums, to thread the mazes of the manuka bushes and bright-berried dwarf kurrajong, to scent the Scotch sweet-briar growing only too wildly.

My little friends, the dottrels tripped along the ~~skirts~~ shore They, as usual, appeared to have lost something, and stopped occasionally to think where they had left it. And now I remember an incident which showed their sagacity. Sheltering from a rainstorm one day, a friend and I became interested in the movements of one of these little birds, running fussily backwards and forwards across a shingle bed between a shallow pool and the river. After a time one of the stones appeared to us to be moving, but in reality it was a fluffy little ball, so like its surroundings in colour as

to be hardly discernible. The little mother was still busy gathering her chicks and gradually inducing them to move shorewards when we left. The following day the scene was changed; a fresh had come down in the night, and the shingles were under water, but we thought the little chicks were safe.

As I regained camp, my companion descended the foothills from an opposite direction, and hastened to show me his catch. One a fine fish, indeed, and others well above the legal weight. He had spent the morning, he said, dodging round and sliding down granite boulders, and had narrowly escaped sporting with the fish in the tumbling waters. These he had caught were nothing to some he had seen. Then, in my turn, I surprised him with the nice even lot I turned out of my creel, and so we were two contented anglers, each satisfied with his own and pleased with each other's baskets, as old mates should be.

Whilst relating our experiences of the morning and comparing notes, we set the billy boiling, and, after a late lunch, packed up our kit in good time for the coach, which came rumbling over the bed of a dry water-way. Up and down dale, through washed-out watercourses, over perilous-looking banks, and into storm ruts we went, till we emerged into the plain country.

Far and near the sun was setting the landscape aglow with rosy tints. Sheep moved lazily out of our way as we passed under the shelter-willows at the spring. Magpies piped their evening tunes on the still air, and now and then faint sounds of running water came from among the boulders and bushes of the river's winding course. The painting of the landscape in the closing day was a constant transformation scene—rose madders, purples and warm greys on plains and wooded uplands, the ranges behind deepening into richer and darker tones, whilst stars faintly bespangled the blue overhead. The clatter of the horses' feet rung out as we crossed the bridge over the river which had called us so irresistibly for many summers.

As we approached the hospitable hotel, a red fire kindled among the trees on the ranges and spread upwards and outwards till it topped the dark trunks and branches. Up it

rose, leaving the earth in a full rich golden ball, tinting the hills with streaks of mellow light, and driving the stars in modesty to hide from its beauty. From fire to gold, from gold to silver, a lantern hung in the heavens—the glorious Christmas moon.

PERCH FISHING.

From my window I watched for the first signs of the day that we had planned and waited for. A day to be spent perch fishing, away from the grime and striving of city life.

Grey dawn was displacing the light of the late moon, now fast paling into insignificance. White mists completely hid the meadow land, from which could be heard the lowing of dairy herds. The only signs of verdure were an isolated tree or two and the dark line of the river oaks, except that close at hand, in the rambling garden, were straggling rose bushes, honeysuckle, a few old-fashioned flowers, and in the hotel yard, a coral tree, which, whilst throwing off its yellowy autumn leaves, was budding forth bunches of bright scarlet flowers.

As soon as the sun rose, tinting the distant hills and rocky crags, a Jacky Winter called, "Peter, Peter, Peter!" and fluttered after a belated night fly; then soldier birds announced their advent in the coral tree, by their musical though somewhat aggressive note, and proved their relationship to the honey-eaters by diving their bills into the scarlet blossom. A pair of pee-wits beat the air softly, with the characteristic flutter of their wings, the while calling cheerily to each other; a little blue wren hopped merrily on the yard rails.

The mists broke up and wreathed and eddied about in the warm, bright morning under the influence of a gentle breeze, which carried along with it the distant murmur of the sea; and so the day was ushered in.

After breakfast we were driven up the valley, leaving the more-frequented waters to others. We were trying new "hunting grounds" a brother angler had put us on to, and already, apart from the prospects of the sport, we were content with the beauty of the surroundings and the pure air laden with the honey scent of the flowering grasses.

Here was a bit of Wales; rough stone walls taking their undulating courses over green knolls and slopes, bracken fern and rich pasturage; there were the crags of the English Wye Valley; over against a sheltering "chine" tropical palms reared their heads, and here and there, farms with herds of Illawarra cattle feeding on maize husks or meadow grass. The stream wandered its irregular course through the valley, doubling back on itself now and again, but rarely visible through the dense foliage. As a venture we struck into the stream a few miles above the township, and found ideal water indeed; alternate rapids, stickles, and steady pools. We little cared that it had been fished by the local people for years, and we smiled in the knowledge that the magic fly wand had seldom been waved over it.

A farmer, knowing no other lures but grubs, worms and frogs, looked on with amazement at what appeared to be insane proceedings on our part, venturing the remark that "we wanted grubs, and, any way, we ought to go lower down stream; the creek was no good thereabouts." But the "no good" water had a fascination for us, so, out of a spirit of inquiry, not unmingled with the security of superior knowledge, we wandered slowly on a mile or two till the stream, dropping in cascades from the mountains above, hurried its busy waters too fast to allow it to form pools.

Our baskets, however, began to assume a fair weight, for on the way up, from under banks overhung with bushes, from out entanglements of rocks and sunken trees, from the purer and cleaner waters, fish after fish had dashed, and with rapid swirl seized our flies. Not only had we numbers, but a "run" above the general average in weight.

At noon the billy was boiled, and on a soft green bank we rested for the mid-day meal. Retracing our steps, we picked up two or three brace more of good fish, till, satisfied with our success, we left the stream and took short cuts home.

The sports of the township turned out to see our eight and a half brace averaging 1½ lbs., and pondered over the "new chum" game of catching fish with feathers.

THE INSCRUTABLE TROUT OF WULLWYE.

Wullwye Creek first came under my ken when I was in full vigour of manhood, since when some twenty years have passed into dreamland. Twenty times has its junction with the superb Snowy River met my eager gaze on the first day of as many "honeymoons," for such my angling mates term our renewed loves of the most fascinating river in Australia. The creek rises not far from Adaminaby, 3,500 feet above sea level; but it rises only thence when its rugged rock-strewn bed is invaded by winter snow, or summer storms sweep its desolate track. Normally, its waters trickle for a few miles only, over level spreads of granite and sand, bordered by plains or arid gorges.

Each Christmas for many years has a shout of joy gone up as we have caught a glimpse of the weeping willows marking the end of its 30-mile course.

Though noted for its trout, seldom have trout invaded it for more than about two hundred yards, and then only when a spate in the Snowy has backed up its waters. Across its miniature delta, in the far, far distance, most days, one may see patches of snow drift, set like jewels in the crown of the Crackenback Range. The main river is over a hundred yards wide here, and on the other side are rounded tea-tree bushes, earth cliffs and undulating Dartmoor-like ridges and hillocks, till they abruptly terminate in the low hills of Barney's Range, seven miles away. In the river at summer level, and with the most glorious sunshine of a perfect Australian day, one may wade from side to side on a bed of soft granite sand, knee deep in pure temperate water, thanking God for life and all things beautiful on earth, such as one wonders if even heaven can eclipse.

There are barbed-wire entanglements to be negotiated between the road and the river, but these are compensated for sometimes by a sight of little blue campanulas, as dear to us as the blue bells of our native English woods. This year, before reaching the water, one had to wade through a deep band of small ox-eyed daisies, green herbs and brown flowered rushes. But I am anticipating; the tale of wonders must not commence here.

A learned judge, "Tom major," claims to have deceived the first Wullwye trout, but that cannot be, because, in 1903, "Tom minor" caught his first trout here, making him "all of a tremble"; and I had had the river to myself for the previous three years, and had put the lesser Tom on to my favourite spot.

The judge, however, wading from the other side, did catch the first large Wullwye trout, some 2¾ lbs. or more, a *salmo fario.* A few days after, a beautiful Loch Leven succumbed to an approach by a "hackle hopper" from the same stance, and my bag for that afternoon consisted of one 3-lb. Loch Leven, one 2¾-lb. Loch Leven, one 2¼-lb. fario, one 1-lb. fario and a ¾-lb. rainbow. An odd prize or two rewarded other rods from year to year, but till about 1917 Wullwye trout remained a mystery.

Well do I remember one moonlight night being amazed to see huge trout scooting wildly backwards and forwards over a sand bank, just covered with shallow water, between the creek mouth and a rock amid stream. One leviathan I hooked and played for a brief minute; my friends put this down to hallucination, but it was true, as you will see.

Occasionally we had seen trout feeding in the daytime on the sand banks, but regarded them as belonging to the unattainable.

One summer day, Bert and I strolled leisurely in the kindly sunshine the half-mile or so from the township, to spend a lazy morning. The river was in perfect order, and there at Wullwye, were a dozen fine trout feeding up and down in the shallows. In the clear water we could see every movement. Now and again one would make a great splash as it seized its prey where a little streamlet dipped over a bank into the river. Bert, with his usual modesty and unselfishness, insisted on my trying my luck.

Carefully wading to within casting distance, I dropped one fly after another over the fish, but no response. At last I attached to my cast a small floating "Welshman's button." Then we had the satisfaction of seeing an inquisitive fish investigate and finally sample the fly. During the next hour I rose seven, hooked four and landed three good farios. The next morning I was rewarded with a three-pounder.

Later, Hep, one of the inner brotherhood, approaching from the middle of the river, landed three more. One morning, teaching my boy Jack how to cast, I told him to drop the fly about a yard above a rock in the river off Wullwye. He made a good shot, and as the fly swept down to the rock, plop went a "brownie," which in due time adorned his basket.

But now come the crowning events.

Sam and I took our turn, with others, of going out for the day together in the last week of 1920. I went down stream to "Sam's pool," arranging to meet him for lunch at Wullwye. It was one of those most exhilarating mornings when all the world, including myself, seemed young, and I was a boy again, whistling, singing, wading and casting. True, I only got one fish, but that was not the only one I rose, and I was so pleased with the sport that I hesitated to leave. However, I joined Sam and found him boiling the billy, somewhat late, I regret, for, on hearing me coming, he shouted out, "Hurry up and just come and look at these fish; I've been waiting for you." There, sure enough, were about a dozen Wullyites swimming up and down; occasionally one would sail right down to our feet and have a look at us—like the trout of one's dreams.

Sam said, "Have a go; I can't rise them," so I put on a large home-made floating palmer and dropped it over a good fish. Up he came and filled his mouth with feathers; but no luck for me; he escaped the hook. I missed him again and then he sulked. I thought of an old fly that had adorned my fishing hat for two years which had proved fatal on the Badja, so I dropped it in front of "his nibs." He took no notice as it sank a few inches on to the sand, but on my retrieving he rushed it and fastened—No. 1. "Now, Sam," I said, "it's your turn; sink your fly and draw it"—result, a lovely two-pound brownie.

"Your turn next," said Sam, and I repeated that performance. Well, we took turn and turn till Sam had four brownies averaging two pounds, and I had five rainbows and one brownie averaging one and a half pounds, and all between 2.30 and 4.30 p.m. One of mine was got with a dry fly from a rise and long cast in the river. How we laughed that afternoon!

The river rose and fell owing to thunderstorms during the next few days, so things were only middling. When the water had cleared, Sam and I were drawn again to the same spot. There, about three rod lengths away, one of the "family" was poised at the bottom of about nine inches of water, faintly waving his fins and assuming an indifferent if not insolent attitude. I said, "It's no use, Sam; you won't get him"; but Sam attempted the improbable, casting time after time over him. Without any apparent movement on the part of the trout, and at about the twentieth cast, suddenly he bestirred himself, for Sam's hook was in him. I said, "You must have hooked him foul." However, foul or no, he was so well hooked in the lip that in due course he came to the net.

Next morning we were at the trysting place again, and there was another of the "family" swimming up and down his beat, a sort of gutter in the sand. I rose him once, and a second time with an "invicta," ineffectually. Then he came down and had a look at me. I kept perfectly still, and he again took up his favourite position where the stream trickled over a sand bar. I cast over that fish at least fifty times, and finally he rose and took the fly, as Sam's had done without doubt. He, too, joined the "great majority." Sam went back to lunch. I followed a little later with one of 1¾ lbs. and another 2 lbs. 7 ozs., both farios. Sam followed suit the next day with one of 2 lbs. 6½ ozs.

Yet another event. The river rose slightly. Hep and I explored the opposite bank of the river. Hep called out, "Just look at those fish," and there at the mouth of Wullywe 150 yards away were half a dozen big trout rushing about, half out of the water, chasing food, and looking like small black divers. We hurried back to lunch and to get my camera, so that I might send a photo. to Mr. Marston. Six of us went up to see the sight. To our disgust, Wullywe was vomiting thick mud, brought about by a thunderstorm. A few days later an odd member or two of the family returned in quest of their seductive diet, which we found to be tadpoles, but never a one would look at our flies, cocked, dry, damp, wet, spent, sunk, or drawn. And all the time the Austral sun was shining.

AN ANGLER'S DAY.

Far in the distant west, when dies the night,
The moonlight pales before the morn's grey light;
Soon sunrise tints the tops of distant hills,
A faint wind wafts the sounds of murm'ring rills.
As grows the dawn, which ushers glorious day,
The birds, bestirring, show their plumage gay.
From thicket near and hillside more remote,
Magpie and thrush sing with harmonious note.
The blue of camp fire's smoke floats lazily
And mingles with the crisp air mazily.
Down by the river, stay awhile and gaze
On magic scenes, revealed by lifting haze;
The ripples sparkle, glides in sunlight gleam,
Dark shows the pool still hidden from its beam.
Now, where foam flecked the eddy swirls around,
Or slowly moves, there comes a welcome sound
Of feeding trout, which to the surface rise,
And dimple oft, as pass the floating flies.
Low bends the angler and with cautious tread
Wades silently the stony river bed.
His rod waves to and fro; the silken line
Drops craftily a feather fly so fine.
A moment passes, just a moment spent
In anxious, breathless pause and look intent.
The water's surface breaks! the hook is fast!
Oh! merrily sings out the reel at last!
Swiftly the line's torn off, coil after coil,
The fish seeks rocks round which rough waters boil.
Strongly he fights down in the rushing tide,
Next leaping high, shows his resplendent side,
Turns in the air and tries a cunning fall;
The angler dips his rod or loses all.
Now bending wand proclaims the risk is o'er,
Hard fights the fish to reach the furthest shore;
With sudden turn, back through the pool he flies,
His fetter, slackened, 'neath the water lies.
More free he tries to break by leap on leap,
Then with strong plunge sounds in the water deep.
Full of resource, his liberty would gain,
But bores, and jags, and twangs the line in vain;

Waning in strength, but game and still untamed,
One desperate dash for freedom yet is aimed;
Leaving his native haunts through quickening glide
To roaring rapid is opposed his side,
His weight swept down towards fast nearing falls,
This danger new the angler now appalls.
With rod held high he follows on apace
O'er rugged strand the river's course to trace.
Then sulks the fish beneath a reef again,
Yet slowly yields to the rod's steady strain,
Turns on his side and floats into the shore;
His rainbow gleam shall grace the stream no more!
Good fortune early thus attends our way
Sealing a promise fair of perfect day.
Warm blows the wind, soft cloudlets screen the sun
Earnest of heavy creels ere day be done.
The stubborn tea-tree bush with blossoms white
Attracts the summer insects' busy flight.
Beetles with gem-like wings of gorgeous green,
Some painted modest brown and black, are seen.
Bees, flies and wasps to steal the honey come,
Filling the balmy air with drowsy hum.
Whilst the pale dun which many months has spent
In river bed, seeks lighter element;
Dances in air, and for a short span flies,
Ensures his kind, completes his life, then dies.
In startled flight a hopper hits the stream,
And passes where a trout with sudden gleam
Snatches his prey; then, ghost-like, disappears,
Or spurns the food when he the object nears.
O'er stickle, glide and pool the angler's cast
With varying success ere noon be passed.
Beneath a manna gum or willow shade
Each angler shows the catch his skill has made,
Relates how this one gamely fought, how yet
Another tamely yielded to the net.
Their notes compared they seek repast and rest,
Smoke soothing weed; their being soon refreshed
Wakens to nature's call of earth and sky.
Soaring upon the air hawks' hunting cry.
A duck from shady nook in silence leads

Her young and timid brood to waving reeds,
Among the stems they dart with action quick
From slender leaves the hatching insects pick.
Scared by some fancied foe they dive in fright,
To draw the danger off the bird shams flight,
And quacks and quacks, then falters on the wing,
Trying by every art false scent to bring.
A flight of plovers from yon shingle bed
With shrilly call wheel and fly overhead.
Nearby from underneath a boulder creeps
A sinuous lizard, with alertness peeps,
Silently crawls its victim to espy.
Darts out its tongue and seizes on a fly.
Behind the barren slopes and o'er their crest,
Grey sombre tones appear from out the west,
In bold relief the stunted white gums' bark
Stands out in gleam of sun against the dark
Of glowing storm. The nearing thunders crash
And rumble overhead. The lightning's flash
Darts from the clouds earthward in zig-zag track,
Whilst awe-inspiring calm of air, and wrack
Of clouds, by silent winds fast whirled on high,
Spread out mysterious dread afar and nigh.
Faintly at first the wind sounds its advance
Then louder grows, dead leaves begin to dance
Along the ground; long shreds of bark are rent
From off the trees, whose branches down are bent;
Some limbs from trunks to their decay are hurled
To join dead trees like ghosts of nether world.
See o'er the plains thick clouds of dust arise,
Driven in gusts from earth towards the skies.
Now hailstones glint, then spatter on the rocks
And in the water splash; an echo mocks
The tempest's fury, swells the hiss of rain,
To startled sheep throws back the sound again.
The locusts' call is hushed, and every bird
Seems dead or gone, so little have they stirred.
In sheltered nooks the ground is white with hail
And all around the rain has formed a veil
Through which now grey and misty shadows form,
And gather strength as passes on the storm.

Ah, call of bird returning sun to greet;
And smell of earth refreshed with rain, how sweet!
Each thirsty bush a thousand crystals deck,
Petals of tea-tree bloom the water's fleck.
The briar rose pleads with an enriched perfume
In expiation of a threatened doom.
Over the stream white sedge flies rise in cloud,
Whilst swifts and swallows, with quick flight endowed,
Circle and glide the insects to pursue,
And on the wing warble and twitter too.
Within the channels through the jagged reef,
And 'neath the willows green with slender leaf,
Where'er the water undermines a bank,
Or slowly wanders through the herbage rank,
In nooks protected from the evening sun,
In silent pools or near a rippling run,
The trout alert seeks food of various kind,
Some drowned by storm, some water nymph enshrined
In wondrous garment; they to surface rise
Transformed from crawling things to dainty flies.
The hungry fish liven the pools with splash
And widening rings, or from the depths up flash
And with quick turn ephemeral food secure,
Whilst some, deceived, fall to the angler's lure.

The sun sinks, and a flush of yellow light
The summit clothes of every lofty height,
Transforms the foliage with golden glow
In startling contrast to the shades below,
Where night creeps on, and wraps in mystery
The form of every rock and bush or tree.
As lower drops the sun behind the hills,
A scene of fantasy the vision fills;
Above the shadowed earth the evening sky
Holds fast our sight in wondering ecstacy,
Seeming as though a beauteous world unknown,
To draw us from this troubled earth were shown.
In alternating tints the fair scene fades,
Purples and rose blend with the night's dim shades.
A twilight brief and calm succeeds the sun,
With full content the angler's day is done.

CHAPTER XIX.—ANGLERS' BIRDS.

Nearly all the Anglers I know are bird lovers, their sport makes them familiar with the habits and haunts of birds; so much so that they come to regard them as existing for their special edification and enjoyment.

Strange enough, few of our women folk take more than a passing interest in wild birds; I do not know more than one or two who could name half a dozen birds from their notes. Many men are equally unfortunate; for surely it is unfortunate for anyone to be indifferent to even one of the many pleasures Nature has provided for us. And so I consider that Anglers are especially privileged to "inherit" the world of bird life, or, at least, to claim close association with many of the birds that frequent our quiet or running waters.

Having broken out into verse (of what merit I will leave my fellow-anglers to judge) in appreciation of the grey thrush, and knowing that, of all birds, none is dearer to the bird-lover, I would only add one item of interest. A friend of mine at Wahroonga has so tamed thrushes that they feed out of his hand. Their favourite diet is cheese and, if it be not forthcoming early, the birds call loudly at the verandah door. One day a thrush, mistaking a pat of butter on the tea-table for cheese, flew on to the tray and dug its beak into the butter.

One learns from year to year matters new with regard to birds. Only a few months ago a fellow-angler revealed to me that what I took to be notes of two or three birds, were really those of a lyre bird mocking. We were fishing at Cowan and in a gully, a couple of hundred yards away, the lyre bird was calling, as my friend said, "with thrush notes, clearer than a thrush's"; then the flute of the butcher bird, and the feeble and comical imitation of the kookaburra and other songsters. In many quiet gullies round the waterways of Sydney lyre birds can often be heard calling "chuck, chuck" continuously. Only in the breeding season does the lyre bird whistle with true mating note. In the early morning the song is rapturous, clear, and mellow; like no other bird song that I know, and worth while seeking out.

What an angry fuss the willy-wagtail makes if one happens to cast a fly near its beautifully neat nest, usually in the fork of a she-oak branch overhanging some fresh water pool. The scolding is accompanied with fluttering and swagger and a motion as though it were pivoted on wire like a child's toy. In gentler moods he calls himself a "sweet, pretty little creature" and to impress one the more, repeats the self flattery at night.

The perky little blue wren, more like an English tom-tit than a jenny wren, twitters away in the underground, but does not haunt the streams so much as our gardens. One nested in a creeper opposite my breakfast-room window and the cock bird astonished us one morning by persistently pecking at and fluttering up and down against the glass. We opened the window and put out crumbs, with no effect. When the window was shut the little chap returned and recommenced its capers. This continued every morning for four months. We concluded that, in pugnacious mood, and fancying it a rival, the bird was fighting his own reflection.

The tea tree and briar bushes bordering the Snowy are haunts of many interesting birds. Foremost perhaps is the white-fronted chat, of social habits; for in companies they flit from bush to bush accompanied with little chirps. When I first went to Dalgety I was able to identify a stranger to the district, the English goldfinch. Now, in the spring it would seem that nearly every sweet briar bush has its little nest; not so neat and compact as those in England, but more open, suiting the climate. The cheerful song is quite an acquisition and livens up the bush solitude. During the last year or two I have seen a few goldfinches at Wahroonga. They can be identified by their undulating flight as well as by their canary-like song and the black, white and crimson marking on their heads.

In and out of the shapely tea tree bushes, on the river banks, moves a meek little honey-eater, calling "chick-up" and favouring us with a few delightful, mellow notes, but as though too busy to waste time on us. Its little, round nest contains eggs of a pinkish-white crowned with reddish spots.

But for song, no Australian bird, to my mind, can warble so sweetly as the rufus-breasted whistler. Its notes

resemble those of the nightingale, but are too broken to rival that immortal songster's. These beautiful birds come into full song and abound about the first week in October, but I heard a female warbling a subdued ditty in late August. I remember when camping at "The Narrows" on the Shoalhaven in early October, there was a full choral performance all day long. The golden-breasted whistler, a no less beautiful bird, warbles not quite so fully as the "rufus," though at Mt. Wilson I heard and saw one with glorious and powerful notes.

Starlings I noticed first in the Monaro some eighteen years ago, about the time rabbits came there. The present comparative scarcity of grasshoppers on the river banks, I attribute to the rabbits having eaten out certain thistles then growing on the banks which attracted hoppers, and the starlings having destroyed their eggs. Starlings in hundreds roost in the briar bushes and, at sundown, may be seen in long flights, making for their roosts. It is strange to see them all, one after the other, rising or swerving over an imaginary object, just as sheep jump over some fancied obstacle.

One of the handsomest of our birds is the bee-eater, rarely plentiful in the Monaro, but always conspicuous, on account of its striking plumage—reddish wings, green back and black tail with two extended spine feathers. The bird perches on high branches from which it gracefully swoops on its victims, not necessarily bees. It builds in holes in the banks and somewhat resembles a kingfisher.

The blue kingfisher is not common on the Snowy, but often flashes past, over perch streams and salt water rivers. Halcyon sanctus or "Summer bird," belies his name, for not only does he eschew fish diet, but like the giant kingfisher (laughing jackass) nests in holes in trees and trades on the reputation of other favourites as a harbinger of spring. A wee pet of the angler and frequent companion is the busy little dottrel, flitting and running along the sandy margins of the water and picking up flies, both dry and wet; they have never been known to be as complimentary as a swallow which picked up one of my floating flies, rather to my chagrin. It was the occasion of an extra good long and straight cast, aimed at a likely spot for a good fish and I

had no wish for my fly to emulate the aspirations of an aeroplane. Swallows are confiding little chaps and sometimes perch on one's rod.

Parrots have their favourite haunts. We always reckon on finding some in a certain scrub. The most gorgeous is the crimson parrot of rich red and blue, the latter being on the wings and tail. A fine, wholesome-looking coloured bird and not too shy. For confiding birds none, I think, compares with the quaint gang-gangs; grey birds with pink heads. They go about in companies, crowding up together on a branch and caressing each other as though love-making. They will allow one to stroke them with a rod without showing alarm.

Whilst on the Goodradigbee I came across a number of the huge handsome black cockatoos in the she-oaks, and a friend at Wee Jasper told me that at night he had occasionally heard a weird owl that made unearthly screeches like a child being tortured.

On the Barrington, flitting among the scarlet Callistemon flowers, overhanging the water, one sees beautiful little blood birds, as scarlet as arterial blood. But for their movement, one might take them for blossoms. These birds are among the spring arrivals in my garden, their favourite hunting places being turpentine trees when in flower.

Spine-bills, too, are my constant visitors, hovering like humming birds about a common red fuchsia, the sprays of which almost touch my breakfast-room window.

Black duck and wood duck, the latter really geese, are too rare on our trout streams. Shags are too plentiful. One called a "sinker" is most uncanny. It sinks all its body except its neck and head, which looks like a snake about to strike. It is a very wary bird, has a very sharp pointed beak and evidently stabs its victim, which accounts for trout being sometimes found with a wound on one side only.

There are many other aquatic birds to be seen, but one must not omit to mention the graceful blue crane that in its flight floats along like a whiff of blue smoke on the breeze.

Huge white-bellied sea eagles often come sailing over us when fishing in the estuaries. Their call, though harsh, is not unmusical. But the king of all birds is the wedged-tailed

eagle, commonly known as the eagle-hawk. He is indeed a noble bird, the largest eagle in the world; not so heavy as the American eagle, but with a wider spread of wings.

The pallid cuckoos arrive in September. Their cry is a monotonous cadence, commencing with the lowest note, rising to a shrill treble. On the Goodradigbee I have heard this varied by little turns at the end of each note. One spring a couple of cuckoos persistently fled to a Virginia-creeper on the wall of my house. I could not think what they were after, till I discovered that they were taking caterpillars. In a few days they had cleared away all the pests.

The pretty little bronze cuckoo has a shrill, pathetic whistle, which is kept up for hours at a time, and is often heard on the banks of our rivers.

A tragedy in a lark's family once came under our notice. We found a parent bird dead and hanging by some horse-hair, left on a fence where a horse had been rubbing himself.

As I write I imagine I hear the soft fluttering of the wings of the pee-wit and see elegant honey-eaters with rich green and yellow plumage, but I must leave these and other birds for the further contemplation of those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

No angler who has a love for nature should be without a copy of *An Australian Bird Book,* by Leach. The coloured plates are so true that one can readily identify birds thereby.

CHAPTER XX.
WHERE TO FISH AND OUTFIT REQUIRED.

A stranger arriving at Sydney on fishing bent should visit the Tourist Department and obtain information as to locality, travelling and accommodation. For the benefit of those who may not have this opportunity, I give the following outline:—

NORTH OF SYDNEY

(r—river, s.w.—salt water, c—camp, h—hotel, m—miles.)

MACLEAY R, AT KEMPSEY, 313 m, good h, good perch a few miles above town, estuary perch at Smithtown. South West Rocks at mouth of river good s.w. fishing.

PORT MACQUARIE, HASTINGS R., 282 m. via Wauchope, fair h. Bream fishing from breakwater, beaches or boat. Excellent blackfish off seawall, wharves and rocks. Flathead and whiting, etc., in season (October to June) drifting and otherwise. Outside fishing possible. Cabbage for blackfish plentiful at Flagstaff Point; no weed locally; worms and pippies about two miles on beach, and at shop in township.

Above Wauchope good fly fishing for perch, also in Pappinbarra Creek. Motors and boats obtainable.

Very large perch in Lake Innis near town, but hard to get.

LAURITON, via Kendall, s.w., motor 6½ miles, fair h.

HARRINGTON, by motor from Coopernook, 250 m., good fishing and fair h., s.w.

TUNCURRY, motor from Taree, 235 m.; fishing similar to Port Macquarie; Sloman's Hotel, good.

PORT STEPHENS, motor from Newcastle. The best resort for game fish in winter. Mixed s.w. fishing in summer.

WINGHAM, 228 m. Between this town and Gloucester, a distance of 36 miles, are the Gloucester River, Barrington, Manning and Dingo Creeks, perch streams. Wingham is on the Manning where it is tidal. The following stations are close to the river: Charity Creek, Mt. George, Bundook and Bulliak. Train leaves Wingham at 9.4 a.m., returning from these stations early—too early in the afternoon. The rivers are alternate pools and rapids, and have seldom, if ever, been fished with the fly. Write to Fulton's Hotel,

Wingham, for information. The scenery is beautiful; river flats and high, tree-clad hills.

GLOUCESTER, 192 m., fair perch fishing. By motor or buggy one can reach the same rivers as from Wingham—in addition, the Little Manning, Bowman and Barnard. Good h.

The Paterson, Williams and Karua Rivers are crossed on the way from Maitland to Gloucester, and afford fair perch fishing.

WYONG CREEK occasionally yields good perch with fly, and mullet with worm, also bream and blackfish.

TUGGERAH LAKES AND NORA HEAD, reached from Wyong. Well known s.w. fishing at entrance and beaches, very popular.

GOSFORD for Wamberal, Terrigal and Avoca, the last having one of the best run hotels. S.w. fishing on beaches and from rocks and lakes. Well-known resorts.

NEPEAN, at Penrith, Richmond, Mulgoa, Menangle for perch; much fished.

FROM SYDNEY, SOUTH

NATIONAL PARK, perch fishing, indifferent, permit required from Trust.

ALBION PARK, perch, fair h.

BERRY, perch, fair h. The streams at these three above places have been over-fished.

JERRY BAILEY, 7 miles from Berry at entrance of Shoalhaven River. Good s.w. fishing and good camping grounds.

GREENWELL POINT, s.w., inlet and beaches, fair h.

NOWRA, 94 m. Terminus for further South Coast, good h. Shoalhaven R., s.w. below and above bridge, down to Greenwell Point and up to Burrier. At latter can be caught perch with fly, and bream with bait at the head of tidal water. Fine camping ground fourteen miles above bridge. Subject to spate.

SUSSEX INLET, 20 miles from Nowra, s.w. r. and beaches, fishing variable, boarding house.

MILTON. Conjola and Burrill lakes and beaches few miles away. Cork's Hotel. Millard for boats; s.w. Small perch streams in district.

BATEMAN'S BAY, s.w. fishing in river and on beaches few miles away. Up river near Nelligen, perch in Kurrawong Creek.

BODALLA, excellent h. Tuross r., fresh and s.w.; very good perch up river; beaches about six miles away.

NAROOMA, fair h., very good s.w. inlet and beaches.

BERMAGUI, port; nice quiet place, s.w., fair h., r. and beaches.

BROGA R. alongside road many miles before reaching Bega from North. Very pretty stream; should be good fly fishing for perch, c.

BEGA, seven miles down Bega River to port of Tathra, where there is fair h. and s.w. fishing from rocks, wharf and beaches, and river, also perch streams near.

BEMBOKA, fresh water stream comes over Brown Mt., trout in upper reaches.

NIMITYBELL, McDonald R., four miles away, few trout.

COOMA, 270 m., centre for Monaro trout stream. Badja and Tuross about 30 miles away by car; altitude about 3500ft.; fine rainbow trout; camp or farms. Murrumbidgee R., 5 to 20 miles, fair trout fishing when water clear. Euecumbene R. 40 m. via Adaminaby, altitude 3500ft., also Murrumbidgee 10 m., and Black Creek and other small streams in district, fair h.

DALGETY, 32 m. from Cooma, Snowy R., good water, subject to flood, comfortable h., rainbow and brown trout.

JINDABYNE, 35 m., fair h., Snowy R., good trout but shy.

THE CREEL, 40 m. from Cooma, Thredbo and Snowy, fine water, comfortable h., rainbow and brown trout, much fished.

HOTEL KOSCIUSKO and Betts' Camp, up mountain for Snowy, Spencer's Creek, etc., rainbows, altitude about 4000ft., good trout.

Mowamba, Jacob's and Gungarlin streams in this district have rainbow trout; c.

TUMUT district. Tumut R., fine stream, good rainbows in upper reaches above Talbingo, where there is a comfortable hotel. At Yarrangobilly Caves House, trout, good stream. Goobragandra and Buddong, trout, 10 miles and more above Tumut, much fished, c.

Happy Jack Creek is upper waters of Tumut, c. Gilmore Creek in district, nice little trout stream.

KIANDRA, "four mile" and "nine mile" dams containing probably finest rainbows in the State. Small streams in district, head of Euecumbene. Fair h. and c.

TARANA DISTRICT. The Duckmaloi, Fish River, Abercrombie and Campbell's Rivers, trout, fair fishing at times, much fished.

QUEANBEYAN, r., above Captain's Flat, reached from Bungendore by car, used to hold good rainbows, but has suffered from drought; farm and c.

NEW ENGLAND. Many good trout streams not much known to tourists.

For further information apply to—

J. E. Paterson,
Hon. Sec. N.S.W. Rod Fishers' Society,
Sports Club, Hunter Street,

CLOTHES

For outfit, one's clothes should be suitable for extremes when on the trout streams. Woollens should always be worn; an undervest, a good stout flannel shirt with pockets, Donegal or similar tweed knickers, underpants and thick stockings and strong boots constitute a suitable wardrobe for hot weather. A light grey cotton coat with good pockets adds little weight and helps to temper the heat of the sun. A light, wide-brimmed felt hat is essential. A sweater should be available for cold weather, together with a warm tweed suit. A good oilskin is necessary for rain and cold and to put under one's bed if camping. Few men wear waders except in the coldest waters or as a precaution against snakes, for which purpose leggings are useful, but I usually put on an extra pair of old stockings from which I have removed the feet. These, if brought over the boot, also help to keep out sand.

One generally sees a snake or two during a fortnight's holiday. They are "black," "tiger" and "brown," the last being the most dangerous, but during my twenty years' fishing I have never heard of an angler being bitten. The poison of an Australian snake passes down a groove on the outside of the fang and is, therefore, almost certain to

be harmless should the bite be through thick clothes. One should be cautious with the hands. I put my hand on a snake once when pulling myself up a bank and on another day shook something off my leg which my mate following said was a tiger snake. I have killed a fair number of the Eve-beguiling serpents, but I regard the vermin in the same way as some juvenile friends of mine who used to go out hunting snakes. When asked by their anxious mother why they indulged in such a pastime, they said, "Oh, mother, we love it because no matter how many we see each one gives us a fresh fright." Snakes are plentiful in the higher altitudes, possibly because such locality is less frequented. Mosquitoes and sand flies are unknown on trout streams but small flies are very worrysome at times. When one is camping, for an hour just about sunrise blow-flies are troublesome. They are, in fact, our greatest pests and will blow anything, blankets and rugs especially, so one requires a mosquito net for safes and tent flaps.

For salt water fishing many adopt the clothing outlined above, summer and winter. They wade in knickers and stockings as in fresh water. Others prefer shorts. Walking about on the wet cold beaches, I am reluctantly compelled, at my age of three score years, to grant that it is not quite the best way to ward off the rheumatic fiend, but wading in Monaro waters in the usual summer weather has more than once driven sciatica away, though, possibly, the change to the dry climate has been chiefly responsible for the benefit.

TACKLE

So many men have asked my advice about tackle that at the risk of repeating myself I here mention my idea of a moderate and reasonable outfit which the angler may elaborate as he gains experience.

For Trout and Perch Fly-fishing.

Split-cane or green heart rod, not more than 10ft. long.

Metal reel, about 2½ inches diameter.

Line, double taper oiled silk, medium weight.

Casts, half a dozen, 6 or 9 ft. tapered down to 3.x for trout.

Casts, half a dozen, 3ft., strong level gut for perch.

Flies: Trout—Hopperhackle, Invicta, Coch-y-bonddu. Perch—Peveril of the Peak, Hornet, Heckham Peckham.

Landing net. Mutton fat for line. Fishing bag.

For Beach, Boat and Float.

Rod, split-cane or greenheart, 10ft. 6in. (general rod).

Reel, Nottingham, about three inches diameter, without guard.

Line, Barbour's thread, about 300 yards.

Sinkers, about one and a quarter ounce and sheet lead for light sinkers.

Casts, 3ft. strong gut or Jap gut.

Hooks, 1.0 and one size larger and smaller, small for blackfish, etc.

Blackfish weighted floats and quills.

Landing net with long and short handles. Bag.

My split-cane general rod, which is ideal for this work, with rod handle fixed horizontally, weighted at tip with eight oz., bends as follows: From horizontal line down to rod, at end of first joint 1¼ inches, at end of second joint 12½ inches, at tip 3 feet 3 inches, vertical measurement. If you are making your own rod set this out on a wall and work to it. You may prefer it a little stiffer.

Before closing this book I shall best serve my angling friends by briefly bringing information up to date.

Trout fishing is, unfortunately, at present not as good as it was prior to the season 1918-19. This is almost entirely due to the visitation of cormorants to our streams, where they congregated owing to inland waters having greatly diminished through an exceptionally severe drought. No such destruction has occurred previously since the acclimatization of trout some thirty years ago, and it may be a lifetime before a similar catastrophe happens. Copious rains and heavy floods in the interior have left vast lakes, swamps and well-filled rivers. Fish, yabbies and aquatic insects mysteriously populate the erstwhile dry watercourses with amazing rapidity, enticing water fowl to their more accustomed haunts.

During the last two seasons cormorants were a rarity on the trout streams. I saw a plentiful supply of troutlings

and a fair number of fish about the legal length (10 inches) and I know where I could cast a fly for a few two-pounders not in vain. A few good bags were made from the unfrequented upper waters of some rivers, the rainbows scaling from two to seven pounds. It seems, too, that what fish escaped were thoroughly scared and would not readily feed on the surface of the waters.

The New South Wales Fisheries Department, with the assistance of the New South Wales Rod Fishers' Society, which gave 100,000 ova, distributed something approaching 200,000 fry last year, and this year it is the intention to put out about three times as many.

In comparison with other countries, excepting in the experimental stage, under the direction of Mr. Frank Farnell, the stocking of our rivers has not been liberal enough. Our Governments fail to realise how attractive and remunerative (possibly indirectly) our upland districts might be made with a little more judicious expenditure, such as obtains in Tasmania and New Zealand. The waters of the Monaro, New England and Guy Fawkes districts of 3000ft. altitude and over are a most valuable asset and each should have its hatchery. Wonders have been done with our unsuitably situated hatchery at Prospect (on the hot plains near Sydney) but nursery ponds on the Thredbo have been abandoned for some reason not satisfactorily explained. The Fisheries Department does not lack officers full of enthusiasm, but they are handicapped for want of more sympathetic treatment by those who hold the purse strings.

Even with the scant resources available, if anglers will deny themselves a little and take only light toll of the streams, trout fishing should recover in two or three years. But if my bags are to be small, I look forward to by no means the least satisfying aspect of the sport, good companionship and the freedom of the countryside and charm of running waters.

In fishing for perch one may have to go further afield, but means of access are easy and there are plenty of virgin waters that have never yet floated an artificial fly. It is to the salt water that we must look, however, for the greatest future development in angling. When I consider that only about twenty-five years ago I was the only Sydney

angler who consistently used a rod and was subject to much good-natured chaff therefor, the popular hold rod fishing has since taken is indeed remarkable. Hundreds of anglers now ply their rods at week-ends, from ocean rocks and beaches, but few, strangely enough, do any ledgering from boats, hand-lining still claiming many adherents.

Dr. Cox, who in July 1910 gave the Rod Fishers an account of his and Mr. Merewether's fishing for game fish off Tweed Heads, has many followers, and I think that the near future will make Australia famous in this respect. In all this salt water angling there will be great advance, both in method and number of disciples. As an illustration of possibilities in this direction I relate recent experiences at Port Macquarie, which I pick out as one of similar happenings possible in many other places. A night journey of 280 miles by train, then motor 12 miles, arriving at our destination for breakfast. We engaged a boat for £1 a week, doing our own pulling. Twenty minutes' rowing sufficed to land us on the north side of the harbour. There we walked about a mile and gathered pippies (shell fish) out of the sand; enough to last three or four days. Through the rising tide we fished for and landed some nice bream and a whiting or two, returning to the township on the falling tide. Other days we fished inside the entrance from a boat, kellicking so as to cast into the deep holes and eddies. As the tide came in later during the week, giving us a longer ebb, we fished off the sea-wall or wharves for blackfish, and sometimes, with a low tide and calm sea, off the end of the wall and adjoining beach for bream.

Blackfish up to a couple of pounds were plentiful and gave excellent sport for hours at a time. Bream on the beaches were biting well and two friends who devoted all their time to this sport brought in every day half-a-dozen to three dozen fine fish.

The time of the year, late June, was the most unfavourable for inside fishing, yet during a fortnight we brought in several nice bags of bream, whiting and flathead, quite enough to satisfy us.

At night large numbers of bream are caught off the sea-wall, local anglers using long bamboo poles, strong lines

and mullet bait with crane-like action! One man, fishing for market, landed 150 which he sold for £9. We went down to the sea-wall to see what was doing one night and found the hero of the big catch hand-lining for jewfish. After fish having taken two or three mullet baits, he at last hooked a "jewie" of about 60 lbs. There was a terrific commotion in the water, as our friend gave him no line but just hung on. Eventually the fish broke away. My mate tried his luck the next night, using half a large blackfish for bait. The result was a strong snapper line twice broken.

In addition to the sport indicated, in favourable weather one can troll for big game fish or fish for snapper and groper outside the bar, and for those who like it, drifting up the river in the season, with worms for bait, will account for good hauls of flathead and whiting. The tides are strong and good stern and bow kellicks are essential to keep the boat steady when ledgering. Sound limbs and alertness are needed to pull against the ebb rushing out to sea.

The river came down brown and fresh from the uplands whilst we were there, to mingle with the clean, clear living waters of the sea, and led our thoughts from the shore and the sands and the waves to its windings through mangroves and reed-bordered riverway; on through dairy farms and green meadows and under rich eugenia trees; on among ferns and dense tropical foliage sheltering great perch; then, leaping and tumbling down hillsides and rocks of the mountain "where the eagles drink," and so at last to the uplands holding its pools and shallows and rapids and brawling rivulets in which swim the replica of the first troutling I caught under the flood-gate of the little English brook.

Between these events are the incidents set down herein, nothing wonderful or sensational, just the ordinary fishing of an ordinary mortal, related to carry on the purpose aimed at when I initiated the N.S.W. Rod Fishers' Society, viz., to be of some service to my fellow-anglers, not only in the enjoyment of my favourite pastime, but by leading them to appreciate more fully the beautiful associations of the sport of angling.

[THE END.]

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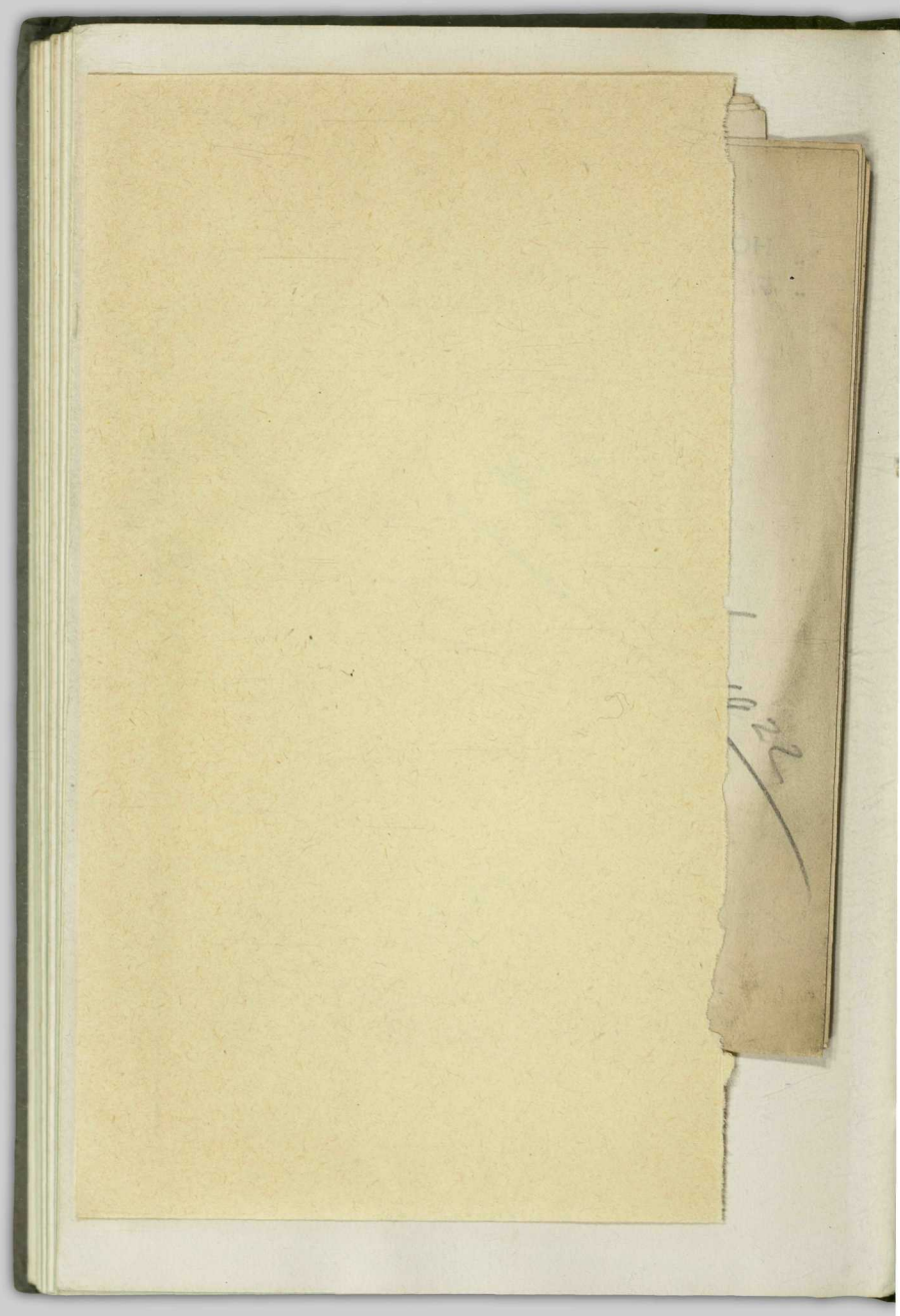
and printed in Australia
by
Arthur McQuitty & Co.
451a Kent St.,
Sydney.



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HOWARD JOSELAND, F.I.A.
F. GLYNN GILLING, F.I.A.
Architects.
B 5304.

17 Castlereagh Street,

Sydney, 20th. January, 1922.

Dear Mr. Marston:

I am sending you a copy of my book "Angling in Australia and Elsewhere". It has cost me about £250.0.0 or more and I have issued 750 copies here and sell at 10/6d. out of which I net only about 5/- per copy, so you see I am not making anything on it.

I notice in the F.G. that you were good enough to give some publishers advice about publishing a book on Fishing lately, I think Major Dickie's "40 years angling" and that there appears to be a good sale for Angling books in England.

Would you be good enough to add to your past favours by telling me if it would be worth while publishing in England. The printers have made a few slips in my book which of course I would revise. The book breaks new ground which appears to be (to me) desirable, from the amount of repetition in some of the recent English books. I had a good time on the Big Badja lately, best take five fish weighing 15 lbs, in an hour, best 4½ lbs, but others brought in one of 5¾ and 5½ lbs and since, one of 6½.

I have just had a month on the Snowy at Dalgety and Jindabyne, had a day on the Mowamba and Thredbo also. The

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Sydney, ... 19

rivers are now quite well stocked having recovered from the cormorant raid, ~~but~~ we had a lot of rain, but in between had good sport.

My book has been very favourably reviewed in many papers.

Glad to see the old cover on the F.G. and I wish you the best of cheer and sport for the coming year. I think things are on the mend here - I am very busy.

Kind regards,

Howard Joseland.

P.S.

It has been a pleasant task to write my book and I hope it will give my fellow anglers pleasure, that's all I care about. I am having it copyrighted.

Answered March 7. 1922

Review appeared in Dec 15. 1921
Sept. 19. 1921