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FLIES AND FLY FISHING
WITH HINTS ON
MINNOW AND
GRASSHOPPER FISHING

CAPT. ST. JOHN DICK.

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WITH HINTS ON

MINNOW AND GRASSHOPPER FISHING.

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FLIES

AND

FLY FISHING

FOR

WHITE AND BROWN TROUT, GRAYLING AND
COARSE FISH:

WITH HINTS ON USING THE

MINNOW AND GRASSHOPPER BAIT.

BY
CAPTAIN ^{Harris} ST. JOHN DICK.
^ "

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THE PREFACE.

I HAVE, all my life, been enthusiastically attached to the sport of fly fishing; and circumstances have permitted me to indulge that passion to a much greater extent, and over a wider field, than either time or opportunity would probably have allowed to most fishermen. For a number of years I have kept a diary of my fishing, from which this small volume is chiefly compiled.

The flies mentioned in this book are not called by their scientific names, as I write only as a fisherman, and for fishermen; and if I have stated anything that is opposed to the opinions of the entomologist, the above must be my apology. Whenever I have made a strong assertion on any subject which is a matter of dispute with fishermen, or rather with writers on fishing, for among *practical fishermen* I believe there to be very few *really* important differences of opinion, I have always attempted to point out the way by which the value of my opinion may be tested by the reader.

On one point I trust I may, without presumption, be sanguine; and that is, that the artificial flies given in this book will, if properly dressed and compared with the

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natural fly that they are respectively meant to represent, be found to be very good imitations, and, holding the opinions expressed in this book, I consider this a matter of the greatest importance in fly fishing.

Salmon fishing has not been alluded to in this work, because it would not only have made it larger than I wished, but I also believe that the art of salmon fishing is easier acquired than the best method of killing the smaller kinds of fish, and that there is a much more general knowledge on the subject.

So many books have been written on fishing in all its branches, that it may perhaps be deemed superfluous to send forth another ; but as I do not consider the subject to be yet exhausted, I can only trust that the contents of this work may be considered by fishermen sufficiently acceptable to plead my excuse.

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TROUT.

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I AM afraid that it is quite certain that trout fishing in England and Wales is getting worse every year. At most of the favorite places of resort of a fisherman, where, fifteen years ago, on a good day, he was tolerably certain of filling his basket, he is lucky now if he succeeds in killing two or three brace of trout, besides, in all probability, finding numbers of rods flogging the water in every direction, and yet preservation, at least as far as theory goes, is carried on to a much greater extent now than formerly. There are many reasons for this state of things, the chief of which, I think, are—

1st—That poaching is carried on to a much greater extent now than formerly.

2ndly—The great pollution of rivers by mills and sewerage.

3rdly—That from the above reasons trout are scarce.

4thly—From the number of fishermen in the present day having so much increased, all waters that are not quite private property are so continually flogged, that fish never rise very well.

During the last ten years, I have fished a very large number of rivers in England, Wales, and Scotland, and am convinced that poaching is everywhere carried on, and that, very often, poaching of the worst description. Preservation, when it is not most *thoroughly* carried out, is an encouragement to the poacher, for he expects greater gains from preserved water, and the fish are also *more collected* in it. The poacher of the present day is, in general, quite a different stamp of man from the old hand, who was most probably an enthusiast about fishing, and poached a bit at odd times, when he could get a ready sale for a brace or so of fish. The present man does not often work for himself, but is furnished with tools, such as nets, etc., by some scoundrel in one of the large towns. This hired poacher's plan is to stop at one of the small secluded beershops all day and sally forth at night in gangs of three or four, to do the netting. They hand over the fish taken to some one sent by their employer,

and are, I believe, usually paid according to the amount of fish. The small fines given as a punishment for this offence by most magistrates are not the slightest use in checking it.

There is also great poaching carried on in the neighbourhood of all watering places, or any other summer resort of visitors, by men on their own hook. The hotels and lodging-house keepers, or the visitors themselves, buy fish ; and the poacher finds he can always obtain at least one shilling a pound for trout or grayling.

Another dreadful evil is having the brooks poisoned, a constant, and in several cases a yearly occurrence now-a-days. If the delinquents are caught (which if a sufficient reward is offered they sometimes can be) they ought to be most heavily punished, even by those magistrates whose maxim is: fish poaching no crime. It is a dastardly act—as bad as firing ricks—and utterly destroys every living thing in the water. It will most probably be asked how has this sort of poaching arisen, and what are the water-keepers about? The principal reason is the great demand for and great facility of disposing of fish now, in comparison to what there was formerly. The poacher of some years ago was fond of rod-fishing, and as there was generally some free water he could always fish legally

somewhere, and his night poaching was, as a rule, confined to night lines, or the rod and worm : but principally the former ; as from being out all day he did not care so much about being out at night. I do not mean to say that there was at that time *no netting* at nights, but owing to the difficulty of disposing of *any quantity* of fish, it was comparatively speaking very seldom practised.

As to the keepers. On private trout streams the owners seldom have a *special* water-keeper, but rely for the preservation on their gamekeepers. Now, in former days, these were sufficient to prevent much poaching, or at any rate netting ; the only poachers about being men who lived in the immediate neighbourhood and with whom they were probably intimately acquainted.

But a gamekeeper does not often think much about water preservation and cannot be very often by the river, and is therefore not sufficient to keep a water at all safe now ; whilst on club or association waters, although the water-keepers are often honest hardworking men, and earnest in their wish to do their duty, yet they have everything against them. You very seldom hear of a poacher being taken up, and yet every man you question as to the reason for the scarcity of fish in a river near where he lives, will account for it by the fact of its being

constantly netted; and at every fishing station you can generally buy fish—but it is a different affair catching them yourself. The fact is the keeper never knows how far the law will back him up if he runs the risk of interfering with three or four reckless ruffians, “and the poacher who works for another is always a thorough blackguard,” in whom a long day’s consumption of liquor has not died out; for it is nearly always after a day and part of a nights pent at a beer-shop, that these forays take place. *Sunday morning* is a very favorite time for them. Supposing the keeper, by great pluck and luck, to have succeeded in seizing one of the ringleaders, the rest having decamped with the nets, etc., he can only summon him, and, in nine cases out of ten, he is sentenced to a small fine which is immediately paid.

The poachers care for nothing except *losing their nets*; these they will nearly always fight for, and one man can very seldom take them away. A very common fault with the keepers is a too great regularity in their habits. They generally visit the water at the same times, and these times of course soon become known to any one interested. They also are, as a rule, so much on the water in the daytime, that, where there is only one keeper, he can hardly be much out at night; they also

do not attend sufficiently to the preservation of the brooks flowing into the main streams, and of course, when trout are up these, they are very easily taken.

Besides the great difficulties the keepers lie under from the laxity or uncertainty of the law on fish poaching, they have also many minor ones to contend against; for instance, men fishing who have no right to do so, but who have always some plausible excuse, such as that they had permission from some man who rents about fifty yards or so of land on one side of the river, and that they did not know they had left his land, they being, when detected, perhaps a couple of miles off. Now, numbers of men who fish with this excuse ready should they be caught, are inveterate poachers, and can at all times obtain you fish; and on club waters it is so impossible, or at any rate so difficult to get the *sole right* of fishing on the whole extent of water the club is supposed to hold, that they are often able to fish almost with entire impunity.

In some places, poaching at night with the wasp grub is carried on to a very great extent, and, in those places, many men poach during the wasp grub season who never do so at any other time. It is something quite wonderful the amount of fish that a clever performer with this bait can sometimes kill during a good night. I have often

met large parties of men starting out for a night's fishing on water that was supposed to be strictly preserved. They wear a bag with two partitions tied in front of them, in which they carry grubs both for baiting the hook and for ground bait; they throw a few of the latter in at the head of a stream, and use a large hook, baited with two or three grubs; they can bait this by feel in the dark. Three or four men will do great harm in one night. Where the wasp grub and another bait—the ant egg—is much used, fish never rise at all well to fly. I attribute this to the ground baiting. There are also, in the present day, other hindrances to properly preserving club waters, which are well known to anyone who has had anything to do with the management of them, and the keeper often arrives at the conclusion, and acts on it, that he has hardly any real power, which is unfortunately too true.

The number of paper, paint, and other description of mills all over the country have greatly diminished the fish in all waters coming under their influence; several rivers that were formerly full of fish have now become utterly destroyed. I think that the sewerage from towns also does much harm; you seldom find many fish near and *below* a tolerable sized town. The fact of that part of the river being often the most fished is not sufficient, in

my opinion, to account for this ; but I have no doubt that wherever the sewerage is conveyed into rivers, as it very frequently is now, it is most detrimental to the fish, and all these pollutions, I believe, account for a fact which has struck me during the last few years, and which I have also often heard commented on by other fishermen, viz.—how often you kill trout, “especially large ones,” *in shocking bad condition even in July.*

On all waters where they sell weekly or daily tickets, the fish are so constantly whipped over that they get no rest, and at last will not rise very well, *even to the natural fly itself.*

For one man that fished twenty years ago from love of the sport, and who was probably a fair hand at it, and a sportsman, there are hundreds of men who flog the water now, and who, in a great number of cases, only do so because they are on what they call an outing, and the river is near. There is no place in Great Britain where the real fisherman can retire to, so as to be free from these tourist, or rather excursionist, fishermen ; and the worst of it is, besides spoiling the fishing, they utterly demoralise the small fishing inns, which used to be so pleasant.

I believe the reasons above given are the true ones for

the fishing having become so bad in this country, and that it is bad cannot, I think, be denied.

On salmon rivers the means taken for preservation are greater, and the law is also stricter; but the prizes to be drawn by poachers being also greater, they are in consequence more daring.

Of one thing I am quite convinced, that both salmon and trout are very much scarcer for the rod fisherman in these days, when there is so much talk of preservation, than they were when the rivers were hardly preserved at all.

There is no fishing which requires so much skill and experience as fly fishing for brown trout. Every man who is fond of fishing can, with practice, become fairly proficient for salmon or white trout, but he requires to have a natural aptitude, as well as a great passion for it, to be really successful in fishing for brown trout in small rivers and brooks. He also requires to have a good eye for water, a thorough knowledge of the habits of the fish, and also as to the seasons, weather, time, and water in which the different flies they feed on come out, and the general habits of these insects; and, lastly, great perseverance, and a sanguineness that cannot be entirely depressed, however bad his sport may be.

The time to commence fly fishing depends on the river; but, as a general rule, trout are not in anything like condition until after the March brown has been some time out. This refers to rivers on which the fish principally feed on flies; on some rivers they are fit to try for in February and March, and at this time of year they come very greedily at the fly; but I think the 15th of March would be a good opening day on most rivers.

I consider April and September the two best months in the year for fly; of course, on one or two waters the last month is too late.

In early spring, trout lie close to the sides, and should be fished for there, and again late in the season. In summer they are scattered over the streams; but during the period that the May fly is on the water, they generally keep under the banks; after the fly is off, they are again scattered.

I do not believe it is in the power of man to give any hints that are worth anything as to good or bad weather for fly fishing. I have had first-rate sport on days when everything seemed opposed to it, and *vice versa*.

If the water is in order, and you wish to fish, never think of the weather; as a rule, the things most against success with the fly, are—

1st—Snow in the water.

2ndly—Sheep washing above where you intend fishing.

3rdly—A cold easterly wind.

4thly—Heavy rain overhead, or soon coming down.

In the first two cases you hardly ever rise fish at all.

The last two are very undesirable, but I should never despair on account of them, having often had good sport under both circumstances; but if there is a flood coming down, fish seem to have a foreknowledge of it, and leave off rising long before it does come, and fish (grayling especially) generally cease rising whilst a thunderstorm is overhead; but with trout there are sometimes exceptions to this. Weather, therefore, is a matter that should not bias you; but the *condition of the water* is of the greatest importance. Water is in the very best possible condition for the fly when it is clear, and neither too high nor too low, and which has remained undisturbed, neither rising nor falling *abruptly* for several days; but fish will take the fly if properly presented to them in much more colored water than is generally supposed. The man who combines bottom with fly fishing never discovers this, for immediately the water becomes at all colored, he takes to worm fishing, and in most cases is glad of the opportunity or excuse, for I believe it to be nearly always the case

that the man who is fond of bottom fishing cares very little in comparison for fly fishing.

By fishing *close* to the sides a few fish may be taken in any water that is not so thick as to *sicken* them. For the May fly the water can hardly be too colored. I believe that the *temperature of the water* has much more to do with sport than anything else ; the best possible criterion you can have, as to your chances of success, is *the feel of the first fish you land*. If this is *warm* to the hand your chance of sport is good, but should it feel *very cold* you are very unlikely to kill many more. Any reader of this can try the experiment for himself, and having done so for a whole season, I will answer for his assent to the efficacy of the test.

It is impossible to describe the best places to fish for trout ; experience is the only thing that can teach this.

That fish take the artificial fly for *the identical natural fly*, of which it is intended to be an imitation, I have not a shadow of doubt, and therefore it should bear as great a resemblance to it, in every respect, as it is possible to attain. Color is of course a great thing to be considered in dressing flies, but it is by no means everything ; because, if it was, a hook with any of the right colored material and feather wrapped round it anyhow would kill, but as

it does not do so, and you require to have legs and wings as well as body, and also in many flies distinct ribbing, and all of their different colors, then you have very nearly imitated the fly, and may as well be accurate as to size, form, &c., so as to have an exact resemblance. It must always be remembered that when a fly is imitated, buzz fashion or with hackle only, it is not intended that the wings should be dispensed with, but that the hackle should, in the artificial, stand for both wings and legs in the natural fly.

That fish take the artificial fly for what I have stated is very easy of proof. Fish any stream on which there is the rise of any favorite fly, on which the fish are steadily feeding, satisfy yourself what that fly is, and put it with any two other flies on your cast. I do not care in what position you place the fly on which the fish are feeding, whether as stretcher or as first or second dropper; if you have any success, you will find, with perhaps a solitary exception, you will kill all your fish on that particular fly, and that the other two are not looked at; and flies will kill at one time of the day, and not at others, because the fish have changed their feeding to another variety. I will here give another very easily tried, and, I think, perfectly satisfactory test.

Supposing there to be a good rise of the *blue dun* on, in the month of February, on this fly the fish (whether trout or grayling) are steadily feeding. Place on your cast imitations of both the blue and yellow duns, and fish with these, you will find that every fish you kill has taken the *blue dun*—*the exact imitation of the fly on the water*. The yellow dun rising *no fish*.

The curious thing is that men who assert that any fly will kill when the fish are taking, yet themselves use different flies for spring, summer and autumn; but, I believe, it is impossible for a fisherman, with any *real* experience, to hold any other idea than that the artificial fly is a successful lure only in its imitating closely a particular fly. Some of the arguments used by writers in direct opposition to this are curiously incorrect.

One says that his experience proves that fish nearly always take the bob fly, when they show a preference as it is the fly *first* presented to them. I can only say if that is his idea of fly fishing he must have had very few chances of discovering that fish take the artificial fly *at all*.

Another arguing against exactly imitating the natural fly says:—"The artificial fly is presented to the fish under water. Wet, instead of dry, and in brisk motion,

instead of passively floating, and therefore under entirely different conditions from the natural fly." It seems hardly credible that any one who professes to have the slightest knowledge of fly fishing could so write.

For both the artificial and the natural fly are, or should be, presented to the fish *under exactly the same conditions*, at least as far as they possibly can be, considering there is a line to one. The imitation, when sunk under water, has the appearance of *the live dry fly on the surface*, and it is only on its being taken out of the water that it presents the aspect of a *dead wet fly*, and with about three exceptions, such as the stone fly, &c., should not be worked at all when fishing for brown trout or grayling, but allowed to float *passively*. Another writer with rather more show of reason says:—"You frequently find that two men have fished the same stream, the same day, and with equal success, and yet they have used totally different flies." I doubt your often finding this to have happened in the case of two *good fishermen*, because from their knowledge of flies they would have been almost sure to have had the *same fly* on at some period of the day; but, even supposing they had not, there is no reason why fish should not rise to a dozen different flies during a whole day, but they take

each of these flies for its *particular* prototype on which they have been feeding at some recent period. The fact is the general fly theory is a very convenient one to men who fish seldom, and if it was only true would save them a great deal of trouble, but I think would greatly diminish the pleasure of the constant fisherman in the sport. Mr. Stewart, who has written a book on the subject, inclines to this general fly theory, but the flies he recommends will all kill fish, more or less, especially in the North and Scotland; for they are all good general flies, that is, *each* is a fair imitation of *several* different actual flies. In the same way as when fishing with the Hoffland's fancy, or general flies, Nos. 3, 4 and 6 in this book, you would always stand a chance of killing some fish; but I maintain that with my imitations of nearly all the principal flies on which the fish feed I could always hold my own against Mr. Stewart, or any one using his flies on the rivers and small streams in Scotland and the North, whilst if they used *only his flies* they could not do the same with me on any of the streams throwing up numbers of different flies in other parts of England and Wales, and also on many rivers and streams abroad.*

* This was written some time before Mr. Stewart's death.

Even some of the writers who assert the same theory as I have done, do not instruct with the courage of their opinions. The author of a small book on fly fishing called the "River's Side," after having asserted strongly that the artificial should exactly imitate the natural fly on the water, and whose maxim is, every fly is good when used at its proper time, commences by recommending for April the February red and alder flies. Now neither of these flies are ever on the water in that month, the former going off some time in March, and the latter not coming on until the middle of May, and also pins his faith on to the bumble and furnace flies, neither of which bear any resemblance to any known fly; besides which, he recommends six flies *only* to be used for grayling, only three of which are imitations of actual flies. Now as that fish feed greedily on, at the very least, twenty different kinds of fly, and that they are quite as capricious as trout; if one followed his advice, what would become of his theory—which is really true—and should therefore be followed out in practice.

Of course trout will, now and then, take almost anything in the shape of a fly, but it is when they are not feeding on any one *particular* fly, or on rivers throwing up very little insect life; but even in this last case, and also in lake fishing, imitations of actual flies will always kill far better than fanciful masses of silks and feathers.

CHAPTER II.

HOW TO FISH FOR TROUT.

FISHING DOWN OR UP STREAM—FALLACIES REGARDING THIS—PREPARING TO FISH—SOAKING CASTS—SELECTING FLIES—CHANGING FLIES—REASONS FOR—FLIES FOR COLORED WATER—FOR COLD DAYS—LOCAL FLIES—DROPPERS—HOW TO CAST—BAD FORM—HOW TO GET RID OF—LENGTH OF CASTS—DIFFICULT PLACES TO FISH—LANDING A FISH—HOW OFTEN TO CAST OVER A FISH—RAPACITY OF TROUT—ANECDOTE OF—NIGHT FISHING—FLIES FOR EARLY MORNING—LAKE FISHING—MANAGEMENT OF A BOAT ON—FLIES FOR—CORRICLE FISHING—HOW TO FISH FROM.

BEFORE proceeding to describe how to fish, I will enter into the question of fishing up or down stream. Every now and then a controversy on this subject crops up in one of the sporting papers, and fishermen rush to the war of pens, many of them, from the shewing of their letters, ignorant of the very rudiments of fly fishing. Why there should ever be any question at all on such a subject is ex-

traordinary ; one would have thought that by this time the right way must have been discovered, for it is not a matter that will allow of any compromise. There cannot be *two good fishermen* holding different opinions on this subject. The one who is wrong can know very little either of the art of fly fishing or of the habits of the fish.

I know there is no use trying to convince men against their wills, but to those who are still undecided, as I am trying to give the results of a very long and very large experience in fly fishing, I say *always fish down stream*. I do not mean that you must always cast *down and below* where you are standing, or even in a straight line across ; you may cast your flies a good deal higher up the stream than yourself, and yet fish down stream. Fishing down stream means that the rod should be always pointing, or, as it were, bearing up stream, whilst your flies are going down. Throwing directly up and allowing your flies to come down by themselves towards you is not fly fishing at all, and the imitations in their descent have not the slightest resemblance to the natural flies. There are very few men who *actually* fish in this manner ; but there are numbers who say and fancy that they do. Many men who always describe their mode as fishing up stream, only throw rather higher than they are standing, and

then, in *reality*, fish down stream. Two or three fishermen, who I trust will read this, will remember their incredulity as to their doing this, and how long it was before I could convince them of the fact—but convinced at last they were.

Whenever you meet a man who talks very much about his performance as a fisherman, and who, when at the waterside, turns out an arrant impostor, he is almost sure to be an advocate for fishing up stream; it sounds more difficult, and therefore more sportsmanlike in his ideas. Even supposing you could throw directly up the river, and could either work or allow your flies to come down of themselves to you in a *natural* manner, with the rod *lower down stream than the line* (which I assert is an utter impossibility), it would still be quite wrong to fish in that manner. The chief advantages urged by the advocates of this theory are—

1st—That the fish lie with their heads pointing up stream, and therefore, when directly below them, they do not see you.

2ndly—The fish in their rise meet the fly coming down stream, and therefore, when fishing up stream you strike against instead of from their mouths, and are consequently more likely to hook them.

3rdly—That if wading or walking up stream when killing a fish, you do not disturb unfished water.

The first two of these statements are utterly wrong in practice, and show an ignorance of the habits of the fish. Although fish always lie with their heads pointing up stream, *they never by any chance take a fly in that position*, but always make a decided turn in the act of rising and take the fly with their heads pointing *down stream*; therefore, at the moment of his taking the fly the fish and fisherman are face to face, supposing the latter to be fishing *up stream*. To prove this, let anyone look out for a trout on feed in some running water, and shallow enough for his manœuvres to be easily perceived in, you will observe that he always swoops round and takes each fly as I have described. But the best proof is to throw your own fly just above him, keeping well out of his sight; if he rises you will see that the fly having passed over his head, he will turn right round in his rise and dash at it. In nearly still water, under banks, &c., he does not always make so decided a turn as when in the stream itself, but his head is always more inclined *down stream than otherwise* when taking a fly; but it must be borne in mind that when trout are *gnatting* they do not follow this rule but take the little midges in every direction all round them.

If the fish take the fly with their heads down stream, it follows that you are more likely to hook them when fishing *down* stream, as you then strike against instead of from their mouths.

Of the above habit of fish, from long investigation, I have not the slightest doubt. As to disturbing fresh water when killing a fish, and fishing down stream, there might be some reason in it, if you were fishing water in which trout lay every two or three yards, or that the fish when hooked were in the habit of running out sixty or seventy yards of line, but as such an elysium has never yet been discovered by me, it is not worth my while speculating on what would be best under those circumstances, but on all ordinary rivers it is a matter of very little importance the small amount of water that may be disturbed when killing a fish.

Every fisherman can, in a short time, with a little careful investigation, now that his attention is directed to it, find out for himself whether my assertion as to the mode in which trout take a fly is sound or otherwise; if it is the former, I consider I have effectually decided the question of up or down stream fishing without any other reasons being necessary. But I will put the habits of the fish out of the question, or even, for the sake of argument,

go still further, and suppose all I have said regarding them to be wrong, and that the advantages I have stated as being urged by the advocates of fishing up stream to be real advantages, there would still be a reason that would counterbalance everything in its favor and utterly condemn it—viz., you can always fish down stream on to a rising fish so as to exactly present to him the stretcher fly and *nothing else*, (which constitutes good fly fishing) whilst in throwing up and over him in all probability you shew him all or a great part of your cast, as it is utterly impossible to decide *the exact spot* on which to throw your fly up stream so as to be *just over his head and no more*.

And now I will try and give a few hints about how to fish. This is easy enough to demonstrate by the water's side but very difficult to do at all plainly by writing; however, we will suppose we have arrived at the river we are going to fish. Put up your rod, fixing the top joins first, and the butt with reel attached last. On a damp day, always rub the brass of each joint with a little soap, this prevents their sticking, and twist a piece of waxed silk round the fastening wires. The best plan of splicing rods is described in the chapter on tackle. The reel should always be put on the rod with the handle to *your left hand*. Having hooked a fish, turn the rod, and

play him with the weight resting on the rod itself, and not on the rings, this keeps it also longer straight and unwarped; the reel will thus be to your right hand to wind up. The end of the line ought to be knotted, and passed through and round the loop of the casting line. The cast and flies should be very well soaked and stretched, so as to be perfectly straight, and without any wrinkles, and also wet enough to sink easily; the very greatest attention should be paid to this. The method I always employ is to put a small lead plummet (such as is commonly used for bottom fishing) on to the stretcher fly hook, and throwing it into the water keep the cast sunk and at its full stretch for about ten minutes. It is a good plan to have a thick india-rubber ring round the butt of the rod in which to insert the leading fly, when walking from place to place, this prevents your flies catching in anything, or a piece of cork may be whipped to the butt for the same purpose.

In choosing the flies to put on your cast, with which to commence fishing, and selecting of course only from the flies in season, your guides must be—

1st—The condition of the water.

2nd—The temperature and the weather.

If the day will suit, always use the fly that has *last*

appeared on the water ; as a rule, the colder the day, the darker the shades of the flies out. Always fish with flies born of the water in preference to land bred flies ; these last should only be used on windy days, there is just one exception to this : the orange palmer, which kills well on warm still days. It is always better to lead with the largest fly. When fishing for brown trout, never use more than three flies, as a rule, two is quite sufficient. I never use more, except in large rivers. There is no mistake so common amongst fishermen as continually changing their flies, and it is the very greatest mistake ; if fish are not on the feed, shewing them every fly in your book will not make them rise any better, and in constantly changing you are only losing time.

Supposing you to have started fishing with the flies on your cast that to the best of your judgment ought to kill, never change, except for the following reasons : If you find that the fish are feeding on a certain fly, the imitation of which is not on your cast, change to that fly, putting it on *to lead*.

Or if you keep rising fish *short* without hooking them, although in this case they occasionally rise from play, and not hunger : yet, the probability is that they are seeking for a particular fly, which they discover your imitations

are not, it must then be your business to discover what that fly is, and put it on. I will here give another proof that the artificial is taken for the *exact* natural fly it is meant to imitate. If at any time you happen not to have the identical fly the fish are rising at in your book, and try to effect a compromise by offering them another, something resembling it, you will generally find that although you do succeed in rising fish, they almost invariably come *short*, your fly looking like the one they are feeding on, until they are quite close to it, when they perceive that it is not the exact thing, and shy off at the last moment. I do not think that any proof can be more convincing.

In heavy colored water use two flies; the leading one should be one of the flies on the water, tied the largest size of that fly; if it is a windy day, the cow-dung is a good fly, and an orange or rough red palmer for a dropper. The stone fly is *not* good in colored water. If you are fishing at any time of the year on an exceptionally cold day for that season, and when there are no fly on the water, you do not want to go home, and yet do not know what fly to use, always try the blue dun tied buzz and the male willow, both small; on such a day you have more chance of killing with these flies than with any-

thing else. There are a few flies that are *local*, even in one river, and should be only used in the parts of it which they frequent. Such are the oak and fern flies, and also the small black fly, called the black palmer in this book. Always remember, as a rule, that the larger the river *the smaller* the flies it throws up. Flies for brooks should always be rather large.

The stretcher fly should be attached to the cast with the ordinary fisherman's knot. When using only one drop fly, put it on the cast three-and-a-half feet from the leading one; but when three flies are used they should be one yard apart. The gut attached to your droppers should be three inches long for small flies, and two-and-a-half inches for large ones.

CASTING.

THE great fault with many fishermen with the single-handed rod is, that they use the arm and shoulder in casting, and throwing thus, it is impossible to cast either neatly or with great accuracy, the propelling power should be given *entirely with the wrist*, and the top of the rod should do the chief of the work in throwing; any other method of casting is flogging the water, but certainly not fly fishing. It is the most difficult thing for

anyone who has acquired a bad form of casting to break himself of it ; but there is one way it can be done to a certainty, have your right arm fastened down to your body, with a strap just above the elbow, and practice fishing thus, you will soon get into the way of casting *only* with your wrist. A much better and longer line can be thrown with the wrist, and with hardly any exertion, than by throwing your whole body into the rod, as some men seem to do. When using the double-handed rod for salmon, &c., although you give a sweep of the rod with both arms, still the force that propels the line *forward* should come principally from the wrists. The length of line that can be cast depends, in some measure, on the strength of the wrist casting it. As a rule, more line should not be cast than can be properly fished, that is, you should not have so much line on the water as to materially interfere with your strike. When using a twelve foot rod, anything over fifteen or sixteen yards, counting of course from the top of the rod to the leading fly, is a long line to fish, but always, if you can cover a good rise or a very likely spot only with a very long line, do so by all means, even if you cannot fish it quite properly. The great maxim in fly fishing should be, cover a rising fish, or very likely piece of water *somehow*

properly if you can; this is especially applicable to difficult thickly wooded places. A strong wind at your back enables you with the single-handed rod to cast a line of almost any length. This is not the case with the double-handed rod and line, as the wind, in this case, hinders the backward sweep of the line, and in double-handed casting the line requires to reach the same distance *behind* as it is intended to be propelled *in front of you*.

With a backward motion of the hand and wrist cause the line to fly out behind the rod, and then the return should be made with a jerky motion of the wrist, something like the flick of a whip, only without any crack; at the moment of the line's being propelled forward the top of the rod should be almost in a perpendicular line from the hand, not slanting over the water. The stretcher fly should alight first on the water and then by slightly lowering the hand, the droppers. If these directions are followed, the line may be thrown in any way, over the right or left shoulders, or from either side, sitting or lying down flat on the bank, which last position is often very useful to prevent the fish seeing you when not wading. On windy days cast with the rod close to the water and as it were under the wind; in this case the return must be made quicker than usual. One of the principal things

to be acquired is, great command over the rod, so as to be able to place the stretcher fly on the *exact spot required*. It must always be remembered that good fly fishing consists in *presenting the leading fly to the fish ; the drop flies are only auxiliaries*. The more exactly a man can throw his fly, the better fisherman he is ; and fly fishing is like pistol shooting in that a good performer at either, can, with constant practice, arrive at the utmost precision, and with the single-handed rod be able to throw a fly at the end of either a short or very long line almost to a hair's breadth, and to fish thickly-wooded waters that most men would never think of attempting. Practice also enables a man, when wading, to fish in very confined spaces, in small streams, where he has perhaps, only about six inches behind him in which to wield his rod.

If you see a very likely place under a bank or the roots of a tree, but which it is impossible to fish in the usual way on account of the great thickness of the overhanging bushes, should there be an opening of two or three inches anywhere within about twenty yards or so up stream, throw your fly into that opening and follow it down stream until it arrives over the place you wish to fish, keeping the fly close under the bank or bushes and straight out from your rod by a succession of slight jerky

motions of the top of the rod. This requires a great deal of practice before it can be satisfactorily accomplished ; but having once arrived at doing it, there are very few places where you are unable to get your flies, and it is in these spots, very difficult of access, and which are passed over by most fishermen, where the best fish lie, and the power to fish them enables one man very often to kill when another has almost a blank day. In very large rivers a man's eye must tell him the best water to fish and the best mode of doing it ; in a moderate sized river cast as a rule, about one yard higher up the stream than where you are standing, and as close as possible under the opposite bank ; follow the flies with the top of the rod, just keeping the line taut, as far as you wish them to travel, *do not work your flies at all*, with the exceptions of the stone fly, the cow-dung, the blue-bottle, and the general fly, No. 5 in this book, which flies you may work freely. In very fine clear water fish with the finest gut and eschew all drop flies, one good fly is enough. In heavy colored water throw almost directly down stream, letting your flies alight about one foot from the bank where the water is tolerably deep, and fish within two or three inches of the sides. In this description of water it is also best to work the flies up and against the stream ; but in

places where there are no banks, but where the water gradually shallows off to the beach, and in colored water these places should always be tried, throw just into the deep, and bring your flies round into the shallow and quite close to the edge, here they must be sunk as much as possible, but not worked at all.

Striking at trout depends on the water you are fishing ; in still or quietly gliding water, a quick strike should always be given, not too hard, the wrist and hand should move back *about six inches*, but in rapid streams it is not advisable to strike at all, merely raise the top of the rod *instantaneously* with a rise. Always play a fish *as heavily* as you can with safety, on his springing out of the water, lower the hand so as just to take the strain off the line, but be on terms with him again at the moment of his reaching the water. The play of a badly hooked fish is very different from that of one well hooked, and can be easily distinguished. In the former case, he fights more on the surface and you must allow him line if he takes it himself, but do not allow him to have it *too* easily, else the slight hold of the hook will probably work out. Always get a fish into smooth water as soon as possible. It seems almost superfluous to give advice on apparently such a trifle as how to land a fish with a net, and I dare

say many when reading this, will think of the advice in Walton, to "use your hat when you have no net," but it is quite wonderful how awkward many men are with the net; and if you do even so small a thing as landing your fish *always wrong*, your take of fish will be less in the year than it would otherwise be. The net should be held *below* the fish, and the latter allowed to go with the stream *into it* and not the net brought *up to the fish*.

Always fish with *a sunk fly*. I believe what is called dry fly fishing to be utter nonsense; as I have before stated, the sunk artificial fly has all the appearance of the dry live fly on the surface, and even if you could keep your fly floating, which (except perhaps in the case of a May fly as large as a humming bird), no one can do, however much they may talk about it, you could not make it have the appearance of the natural fly, because in that position half the fly would look alive and the other half dead to the fish.

It is advisable to consider the habits of flies before deciding whether they are to be placed on the cast as droppers or to lead. All spinners and flies that are constantly flitting up and down should be used as drop flies, as they travel through the water in a more natural way when in that position, whilst flies like the oak, fern, brown

owl, blue-bottle and coachman, should always be used as stretchers.

Having risen a trout short, throw over him again *twice more*; if he does not rise either of these last times, leave him, you will only do harm by continuing to throw and you may perhaps get him another time; but should he come *twice* short at your fly, give him the third chance, if he seems worth it, with a fresh fly. If he then comes again, continue throwing over him as long as he *does* rise, but leave off after your fly has passed over him *twice* without his taking any notice of it, for, although a trout may sometimes be teased into taking a fly, it happens so seldom, that it is losing time to attempt it. A curious thing about trout is that on rare occasions one of them seems as if determined, at all hazards, to take your fly. I have several times killed a fish in quite clear, shallow water, and where, had he not been so intently on feed, he must have seen me. I have also on one or two occasions killed a trout immediately after slightly hooking and losing him; but the following anecdote of the occasional rapacity of a trout seems to me so curious, that I should not venture on telling it had there not been three men living who saw the thing happen. I was crossing a bridge over a river, four years ago, in the May fly season, and looking over

I saw a trout lying close under the buttress of the bridge, and just below the root of a tree that had stuck there, and in about six inches of water. There was a very rapid, deep stream through the centre arch, and the walls of the bridge continued for some distance down stream on both sides, and were about ten or twelve feet high above the water. I threw my fly (a large orl) just over the fish's head; he immediately turned, took it, and went straight down stream. I played him for some time, but happened to have no landing net with me. From the height of the walls, and trees on both sides preventing one from following him down stream, there seemed no possibility of killing him. At last, in despair, I got him into the shallow water close to the bridge, and giving my rod to someone to hold, I climbed over the wall of the bridge on to the top of the buttress—on which there was just room to stand—and which was three or four feet below the bridge wall, and getting the line into my hands, began slowly and steadily to raise the fish. I got him up, and on to the sloping side at the top of the buttress, but as I stooped to take hold of him the hooks hold gave and he fell back into the water a distance of eight or nine feet. I had hardly been a couple of minutes again on the bridge, when someone, who had been looking into the water, exclaimed, "Why, here

he is again," and there was evidently the fish I had just lost, in exactly the same position as he had been before being hooked. I threw over him again; the first time he seemed uneasy and did not rise; at the second throw he came, but short; but the third time he took the fly fairly and rushed down stream. I played him until one of my companions procured a net from a neighbouring house, and splicing it to a pole, we landed him. He was a beautiful fish, just one pound and three-quarters weight, and a *remarkably short thick fish*.

Here was a fish being played for some ten minutes, and then being pulled up through the air a distance of some eight feet, falling back that distance into the water, and yet returning immediately to his old haunt and recommencing feeding. There could be no doubt about its being the same fish, as we had every opportunity of remarking his peculiar shape, size, and general appearance, during the time he was first hooked.

It is always a curious thing to remark that if you take one trout from some favorite haunt, his place is almost immediately filled up by a fresh fish.

In writing on trout fishing, I have not alluded to night fishing, which is carried on now-a-days to a shameful extent. On several rivers, where professional fishermen

are holders of season tickets during the summer months, they often do not commence fishing until very late, and often do not leave off until one, two, or even three o'clock in the morning. Night fishing utterly ruins day fishing, and as there cannot be the slightest vestige of sport in fishing after the light is gone, it is poaching—pure and simple—without anything that can excuse it.

When fishing very early in the morning, I generally prefer the minnow—if allowable—as at that time the regular flies have not come out, but if you are fishing with fly at five or six o'clock in the morning, do not use the same flies you would in the daytime, with the exception of the blue dun, but some of the general flies, Hoffland's fancy, and flies, Nos. 3 and 6, are the best early morning flies.

LAKE FISHING.

IN lakes, the best parts are usually close to the shores or round islands, also at the mouth of a stream or brook running into a lake should always be tried.

When fishing from a boat, let it float with, and also fish with the wind. There is not much use fishing a lake except when there is a breeze; it is best when it is blowing fresh. Fish on lakes seldom feed persistently on one fly

to the exclusion of others ; this is accounted for, I think, first, by there not being the same rises of flies on lakes as on rivers, and, secondly, by the fact that the flies are not carried in the same *successive way* over their heads as in rivers, but imitations will, notwithstanding, always kill better than fancy flies.

The March brown, orange palmer, orl, male willow, cinnamon, grey spinner, brown owl, blue dun, the fern fly (tied as described elsewhere for lake fishing), and some of the general flies will kill, more or less, on all lakes all over the world.

When the fish take well and run large lake fishing is very good sport, but when they are sulky and will not rise, compared with river fishing, it is tiresome work. The best way to manage a boat when lake fishing and alone (and boatmen to me are always a great nuisance) is to have a flat piece of board, with a heavy stone or a large piece of lead attached to it, fasten this to the boat with two ropes, and let it hang over the side to windward as a sort of steadying anchor, the boat is best kept in its proper position, viz.—*broadside to the wind*, by means of a small scull placed in a hole in the stern ; this can be easily worked with one hand ; it will require only a slight stroke now and then, whilst you are fishing with the other. Every

fisherman should try and teach himself to throw with the left hand occasionally, it will very often be found an advantage. Having arrived at the end of the lake, or as far down as you intend going, get up your steadying board, and pull up again to the windward end and recommence your descent, covering fresh water, use a single-handed rod rather stiffer than for rivers; I prefer the single-handed rod for white trout also. When lake fishing, always strike *decidedly at all fish on lakes*, whether salmon, white or brown trout.

CORRICLE FISHING

Is very good sport on very large rivers, in the calm evenings, after hot days. The rod for this work ought to be stiff (for a fly rod) and about ten-and-a-half feet long, never use more than two flies, and your cast should be two yards long and rather stouter than you would use from the shore, as you are unable to give the fish much play.

Guide the corriele so that you can throw comfortably under the banks and bushes with a rather short line, slow gliding rather deep water, much overhung with trees and bushes is the best; throw your fly into all openings in the bushes, and behind roots of trees, and in all likely *deep* haunts of trout. You should have a small net with a

handle about four feet long, and it should be as light as possible. Always remember to kill your fish close under the edge of the corriele, on the right side, if possible, and with your rod bearing hard over to the other side or you will probably come to grief. This would be a delightful mode of fishing if the corriele could be made a steadier conveyance, without increasing its size or making it too heavy to be easily carried, but it is such an exceedingly rickety affair, that, even when you are quite a proficient in its use, you never are at all comfortable in it, it cramps one so much, and it requires constant practice ; you very soon lose the knack of managing them, and if you have not been in one for some time, you do not feel at home in them however good a hand in their management you might once have been. When you can fill and light your pipe, or change your flies without upsetting, you are all right. But always be careful how you embark.

CHAPTER III.

ON TACKLE.

RODS—SINGLE HANDED—WHITE TROUT RODS—FER-
RULED—SPliced—BAD FLY RODS—THE REEL—THE
LINE—LANDING NET—THE BASKET—GUT—CASTING
LINES—HOW TO MAKE—DYEING GUT—HAIR—ATTACH-
ING DROP FLIES.

Rods. For all brown trout and grayling fishing a single-handed rod is the weapon to use; for very small rivers you may have one eleven feet or eleven feet six inches long, and for wider ones, of twelve feet or twelve feet four inches. With the single rod a good fisherman can fish almost any place with the greatest exactness; and if he wades, no matter how wooded, I would as soon go out snipe shooting with a duck-gun as use a double-handed rod on small waters, or anywhere when fishing for ordinary sized fish.

For white trout the double-handed rod is preferable, because you generally employ *heavier flies*, and also stand

n all probability a fair chance of getting hold of a salmon; and although, if you are not fishing with very fine tackle, and the ground will allow of your following your fish, there is no very great difficulty in killing a tolerable sized fish on a twelve feet trout rod, yet it takes a good deal of time; besides that, a reel to hold seventy or eighty yards of line, which quantity you ought to have when fishing for white trout, is too large to be carried with comfort on a single-handed rod. A white trout rod should be about fourteen feet; if longer is required you may as well use a light salmon rod. I prefer a rod in two joints and spliced, the butt should not be made *too small* in the grasp. The fault of most double-handed spliced rods you buy are that they are top-heavy, and the play is bad. A rod should be made, if practicable, by one of the best makers. If you buy from Farlow, Eaton and Deller, Alfred, or two or three more of the best London, Edinburgh or Dublin makers, or from Ogden of Cheltenham, you are tolerably sure to get a good one, but the generality of fly-rods sold are utterly worthless: the joints always stick, the wood warps and the rings are of such soft wire the line soon cuts into them.

As to which are best, ferruled or spliced rods, the latter are certainly the pleasantest to use, and I always have

my salmon or white trout rods made spliced ; but in choosing a rod at the shops you do not find so many spliced ones to select from, and you are always more likely to get a single-handed rod to suit your taste by choosing from several ready made, than by having one built expressly for you.

I prefer a ferruled rod to be of three joints, the wood of which it is made must depend on the fisherman's own ideas as to weight. All greenheart makes much too heavy a rod for general use, although it is very good for some purposes. Much the pleasantest rods to use are those now made of blue mahoe wood by Ogden, but my experience of them has not been long enough to say how they will stand hard work ; their casting powers however are very great. Double brazing rods, as it is called, is always a great improvement ; all the joints ought to fit *quite home* ; this they hardly ever do, and the play of a rod, with half-an-inch of brass shewing out of the ferrules is bad. The top ring of the rod should be made of some hard material, instead of the soft wire generally used, as otherwise the line soon notches and cuts through it. In spliced rods a small piece of bent wire, like that used to fasten the joints together in ferruled rods, should be whipped on at the thick end of each splice, and a long,

piece of waxed twine tied to the upper joint at A, in cut. When you get to the water side all that is necessary is to hold the two joints together, take a few turns of the twine round them, and put it under the wire at B, then wrap tightly back again to A, and then twist the end of the twine round the wire; this will be quite sufficient to keep all tight, and it can be done and undone in a minute. It is necessary to have a piece of wood or india rubber, in the shape shewn in fig. 2, to protect the thin end of the splices when the rod is in its bag.

For trout fishing I prefer a very pliant rod, as you can do much more with it in a very confined space; this however is a matter of taste; but for grayling fishing, the rod should always be rather stiff as they require a much sharper strike.

A great number of the single-handed fly-rods of the present day are made tapered off from the butt, commencing a short distance above the reel; this is radically wrong and *just contrary* to what a good fly-rod should be. A rod should taper *gradually* along its whole length from the very end of its butt to its top ring.

The play of the rapidly tapered off ones is not only bad, but, when killing a fish, they are weak just in the place where they ought to be strongest.

THE REEL

Should be made of some dark metal, of a narrow groove, and with deep sides, and with the handle attached to the side plate, not made with a crank as the line is apt to catch round the latter. For large rivers it ought to be capable of holding fifty yards of line, on small ones twenty-five yards is sufficient; for white trout, about eighty yards of line.

The plain check reel is the best. The check ought to be just strong enough to prevent the line running out without sending in the hook. For my own part, I always use an entirely plain reel without any check, instead of which I keep one finger on the line; but without you are in constant practice this is dangerous.

Multipliers and all complicated reels are an abomination.

The cross bars of the reel, over which the line runs, should be made of some *hard material*, to prevent the line cutting into them; this is not sufficiently attended to by the makers.

All reels should be fastened on to rods in the ordinary

way, with sliding rings ; the Irish plan of a hole through the butt and a knob screwing on is bad and never keeps steady.

THE LINE.

THE plaited dressed silk line is much the best for all kinds of fishing, when expense is an object, the next best are the cable twisted lines, made by the Manchester Cotton Company, but the dressing on these last wears off immediately ; however, they do very fairly without. All hair lines, or hair and silk mixed, for fly fishing are utter trash. It is surprising to me how fishermen could have gone on using them as long as they did when almost anything would have answered the purpose better. I am always of opinion that the generality of fishermen use much too light lines for trout, and too heavy for salmon fishing. A tolerable heavy trout line gives immense advantage in a wind, and with it at any time you can throw much better, neater, and a great deal more exactly as to place ; and as to its making more splash in the water a fisherman ought never *to show his line at all to the fish*. It certainly does wear out the rods a trifle sooner than using a very light one would do, but this disadvantage is very slight, and is otherwise amply compensated for. But, on the other hand, the enormous cables that are made

and used for salmon lines are not required to hold the largest that ever swam, and I do not think you can throw so well with them as with one of a fair weight; but if, for throwing, a very heavy line is preferred, ten or fifteen yards of cast is all that is necessary, and the rest may be finer by which means you get more on your reel.

Having purchased a line in coil, lay it in a basin of water, and let it soak for three or four hours, then undo the coil and stretch it tightly at its full length, rub it down once or twice with a piece of damp flannel held between the fingers and thumb, and leave it stretched until thoroughly dry, then wind it up very tightly on to the reel. The line should of course be dried every day after use, but it is only necessary to draw out a little more than you have been using during the day, and wind it on to the back of a chair—never dry it quickly by a fire.

All the methods I have tried for fresh dressing lines have only done harm, and I now never do anything to them.

THE LANDING NET.

EVERY man has his own ideas, both as regards the kind of net to use and the best method of carrying it. I have the net itself made of dressed silk on a stout wooden hoop, and the handle a strong stick about six feet long (this

may be bored to hold a spare top) armed at the end with a spear shaped-like cut; this carried in the left hand is a great assistance used as a walking-stick in awkward wading, the projecting hook is useful in cutting twigs, &c., on which the flies may have caught.

When using the double-handed rod for white trout, a net with telescopic handle, and with a spring hook fastened on it to hang on the basket strap, is most convenient.

I always wear the basket strapped round the waist like a belt; and, I think, if anyone tries this method they will never return to the usual plan of slinging it over the shoulder. The basket itself is better made strong and flat enough to sit upon. Fishing bags are only fit for very large fish.

GUT.

VERY fine gut is extremely difficult to procure, really good, and although by going to good shops and picking out your casts ready made you can generally get what you wish, yet to those, who like myself always prefer making up their own casts, it is not at all easy to get fine gut in hanks, even by paying very highly for it. All drawn gut

is entirely worthless, and should never be used for any purpose whatever, and one of the greatest disadvantages in purchasing flies is that the smaller sizes are often tied on it. The best criterions of gut are appearance and feel; the finger ought to pass over it quite smoothly, and it ought always to look glossy and bright.

The length of a cast depends on the number of flies to be used, and the water to be fished, but it ought never to be less than three yards long, except when using the stone fly, or black gnat, in the manner described in the descriptions of those flies, or sometimes with a large May fly. And with a twelve feet rod, four-and-a-half yards is as much as a good fisherman can use with comfort. It is more difficult to kill a fish when using a very long cast.

All dyes hurt gut, whatever may be said to the contrary, but yet something must be used to get rid of the *glitter*.

Boil some logwood in water with a small quantity of copperas, and then place the liquor in a bottle.

This dye is better for keeping. Soak the gut in this until it becomes *very slightly* tinged, and wash it in clean, cold water; great care must be taken not to overdo this, so that the gut loses any of its transparency. Gut for all

kinds of fishing should be thus stained. This is the only good dye I know, and therefore I use it; but if it was possible, all gut for salmon fishing, as well as trout, ought to be made like *chestnut hair*. This looks like a weed in the water; and, although fish can see it, I do not think that it at all alarms them.

Casting lines ought always to be dyed after being made up, as you thus get them throughout of a uniform tinge. I also dye gut intended to be used for the bodies of flies in the above mixture.

Hair for fly fishing is, in my opinion, of not much use. I once used it entirely for a whole season instead of gut when fishing for brown trout and grayling, but have since almost entirely given it up. You can get good gut finer than hair, and of much greater strength; and the hair sinks so badly that it is almost useless for grayling. Its advantages are—that you can get it in such long single strands, and thus avoid so many knots; and it sometimes happens that where streams are continually whipped over with gut casts, by giving the fish the *novelty of hair* you may get a few more rises than you otherwise would. Chestnut hair is much the best both for color and strength, and all hair varies very much in its quality.

In making up a gut cast, pick out as long strands as

you can. I do not believe at all in tapering an ordinary trout cast. The cast is, of course, only as strong as its weakest place, and therefore you may as well have the advantage of all fine gut. As to being able to throw better with a tapered cast, it is, I fancy, only imagination; when using a cast of three or three-and-a-half yards, all you require to enable you to throw to the exactness of an inch is, either to have *the line* tapered, or should it not be, whip one-and-a-half yards of salmon gut to it, but with a long cast, such as four-and-a-half yards. It is better to have the first yard of rather stouter gut than the rest.

In making up a cast, the strands should be joined together by tying a knot round each strand with the end of the other, as in fig. 1, then drawing them close and

cutting off the ends. The stretcher fly should always be attached in this way to the cast. There are only two really good ways of attaching drop flies to the cast.

1st—Tie a double knot on the gut of fly to be used as dropper three inches from the fly itself, and pass the knot through one of the joints in the cast, as shewn in fig. 1, before drawing it tight. All small and medium-sized flies should be attached in this manner when fishing for ordinary sized fish.

2ndly—Tie a loop on the gut of drop fly, making the gut about two-and-a-half inches long, including the loop, and at the place where you intend placing a dropper ; make the join on the cast as usual, only on the side of the join *furthest* from the stretcher ; leave an end of gut instead of cutting it close, and tie a third knot round the cast about a quarter of an inch above the join with this end ; pass the fly round both the strands, and through its own loop, and draw it

tight as in fig. 2. The extra knot prevents the loop slipping up the cast, whilst the double strand does not fray so soon as a single one would. All large drop flies should be thus attached, and also flies of all sizes, when fishing either for white trout or where the fish run very large.

This last is also the best plan to adopt when using a drop fly for salmon, but the space between the two knots should, in this case, be first whipped over with waxed silk. All whippings whatever on casting lines for trout and grayling fishing should be utterly repudiated; they are only used by bunglers, and are never necessary.

It is a common mistake to make the droppers too short

from the cast; they ought to be the distance above mentioned to enable them to play properly with the current.

Before closing this chapter on tackle I will give a hint which, I think, may be useful to those who are in the habit of wading in stockings and brogues over them.

Have two good sized holes made in the brogues just above the sole, and in the centre of the foot, and on each side. These holes enable the water to run out when not wading, and, I think, are a great advantage.

CHAPTER IV.

GRAYLING.

WALTON ON—OTHER AUTHORS—PLAY OF—STRIKING—SHOT GRAYLING—FENCE TIMES—SEASONS FOR—A LARGE FISH—WINTER FISHING—CAPRICIOUSNESS OF—TROUT—GRAYLING FISHING COMPARED—CAST—WATER—HOW TO FISH FOR—HABITS OF—GRAYLING RIVERS—TAKING MINNOW.

IN the second part of "Walton's Angler," Piscator is made to remark about this fish that he is one of the deadest hearted fishes in the world, and the bigger he is, the more easily taken; but had Piscator killed the sixteen-inch grayling that was the subject of this remark, on very fine tackle, and with the pliant fly-rod of the present day, he would have given a very different account of the fish's fighting powers.

The habits of this fish are very *decided* ones, and yet several of the writers of the present day, when writing on the subject, show a curious ignorance regarding them.

Mr. Francis, in his book on "General Angling," does not say very much about grayling, but what he does say is almost entirely *wrong* from beginning to end, and the author of a small book called the "River Side," who seems to have fished a good deal for grayling, after giving information as to the habits of this fish, and instructions how to fish for him, in opposition to most grayling fishermen's ideas, accounts for this by the fact of his having studied them in their native waters. Now I have killed grayling in very many parts of the world, and have fished several of the rivers in Germany, &c., mentioned in his work, and I have always found that the habits of grayling are the same all over the world, whether they are natives of a river, or have been introduced into it at some time or other.

And Mr. Pennell (a great authority on pike fishing), says, that "the maximum weight which a grayling under ordinary conditions arrives at is from four to five pounds." This is an entire mistake, a fish of anything approaching that size, is very rare indeed in any waters.

Although he may not make quite such fierce rushes as the trout, the play of a large grayling when hooked is very good, and nothing can be more sporting than the way that he comes up at a fly from the bottom. The strike

must be given *instantaneously with the rise*, in fact if you see a grayling at all near your flies at that instant a strike should be given ; and it is from the great nicety required to get hand and eye to act *exactly* together, that there are so very few good grayling fishermen, and from the same reason so many fish are just pricked and lost ; *not* as is erroneously supposed on account of their being a soft-mouthed fish (although I do not say that this is not the case). A grayling when properly hooked is very seldom lost by a good fisherman owing to their peculiar play, certainly not for every dozen trout. It is very natural that the general belief should be opposed to this, because without a man does acquire the exact knack of striking grayling, he is sure to *slightly hook* and lose numbers.

When hooked, they fight towards the bottom as a rule, but it is by no means a very rare thing for them to spring out of the water like trout, more especially those of unusually large size ; but in fact there is a variety of play amongst them, although not quite to the same extent as in trout.

Small grayling are termed shot grayling, and from the beginning of March until July no grayling over half-a-pound ought to be taken ; those under that weight do not spawn and are always fair eating. The rule with the

Kingsland Club, on the river Lugg, an excellent grayling water, is that *no grayling* are to be taken from March 1st to August 1st; and a very good rule it is, but on most rivers they have no fence time, which is a great mistake. What possible good can it be to anyone to take fish when they are unfit for food, or at any rate not worth eating. They are in best condition in October, and during that month the largest fish take the fly.

A large grayling in real good condition is a beautiful fish; when first taken out of the water they have a smell very much resembling that of a cucumber, and are very highly and variously colored. As to what size they may occasionally reach in Sweden, where they abound, I am unable to say, but a one pound grayling is a good fish anywhere, and one over one-and-a-half pounds, not very often taken with fly. The largest I ever caught weighed three pounds and five ounces, and was killed in the Herefordshire Wye, where there are very few of them; it took a very large trout fly; it was a female fish and a perfect picture; this is much the largest grayling I have ever seen; I have never hooked another over two pounds, although I have on a few occasions, killed fish up to *that* weight.

There is, I believe, a record of one having been taken

bottom-fishing near Ludlow, within the last twenty-five years, that weighed four-and-three-quarter pounds.

Grayling are quite as much, if not more capricious with regard to flies than trout. If there are very few flies on the water, you may occasionally kill with any small fly, but let them be feeding on any one *particular fly* and they will hardly ever look at any other; and on rivers throwing up many sorts of flies, the one that kills one hour will do nothing the next; a fresh variety having become the favourite. They are also much *more unanimous* in their times of feeding than any other fish, and it is this last fact which constitutes the chief inferiority of grayling in comparison with trout fishing. In the latter, even on a bad day, you have always a chance of picking up an odd trout or two, all through the day, and this enables you to hope on, however bad your sport may be; but when fishing for grayling your sport is generally condensed into an hour or two, the rest being almost, if not entirely, blank. Of course there are exceptional good days when grayling will rise nearly all day long, but these are rare.

A drizzly, rainy day is generally good; they also take very well in damp, foggy mornings, especially after frost; they will rise at fly in a lower temperature of water than trout, and if the water is in order and any fly out, you

have always a chance of killing a few fish all through the winter from about twelve till three p.m. in the day, even when snow is on the ground, provided there is none in the water. The sun is the grayling fisherman's *bête noire*, for, except in winter, they seldom rise well, even at the natural fly, when it is very bright. On a cloudy day I always consider that the middle of the day is the best time. Grayling will not rise so late in the evening as trout, and I am of opinion that they do not feed at all at *night*. I have never heard of an instance of their being caught on night lines—that is when the lines were raised at daybreak.

From November until February always fish the deep, still runs at the ends of streams; in July, August, and September they will be found scattered over the streams themselves; they are unlike trout, in that the best fish lie *in the centres* of rivers, not close to the sides. Always remember to try any still water between two rapid streams, such as you often find, for instance, below the buttress of a bridge; this is always a sure find. For grayling fishing the water cannot be too low; they never take well in very high water, nor is it any use fishing for them in water that is colored much. I will not say that it is impossible to kill grayling when there is a stain on the river, but your sport will never be worth the trouble.

You should always use a stiffish rod, and, when wading, eleven feet is long enough. The cast ought to be of the finest gut you can get good; three or four flies may be used on your cast—the last number is quite sufficient, although many good fishermen use five or even six. The flies must never be worked *at all*, but, having made your throw across, and about one yard higher up the stream than yourself, follow the line, keeping it taut with the top of your rod, down and again across the stream, until the flies reach the same side as you are on, and always *sink your flies* as much as possible. It is advisable to fish with not too long a line, as your strike must be so rapid.

But the greatest care must be taken to keep out of sight for grayling are a most quick-sighted fish, and very easily scared. On a very windy day, when you cannot see the rises, keep your eye on the line, and strike at the very slightest tightening of it. A grayling will often rise short at your flies several times and take at last, and as long as he *does rise* you may keep throwing over him; but having covered him twice without a rise, it is better to leave him, or, if worth it, give him a few minutes' rest before trying again. But, supposing the fish to be rising freely all over a rapid stream, I always fish that stream steadily down from head to tail, never hanging or throw-

ing again over a fish that has risen short, but covering fresh water at each throw; then, having reached the bottom, I walk up again to the top, and fish it again down foot by foot; by doing this, all the fish that you missed the first time are ready to rise again, and I am certain that it is a far more successful plan with grayling than delaying over every shy fish.

There is one circumstance well known to those who are in the habit of fishing for *both* trout and grayling—that a very good day for one kind of fish is generally a bad one for the other; for this I am unable to give any satisfactory reason.

Small flies are generally used for grayling, and, as a rule, they are best; but it is a great mistake to suppose that medium sized ones will not kill. They take the February red, female yellow dun, brown owl, and one or two other large flies well. If they never went at anything large, the grasshopper bait would not kill as it does. There is one habit of these fish that is at times most annoying: all at once the water will be alive with them, rising in every direction, and this continues for half-an-hour or more. You watch, but cannot discover that they are taking any flies, and they will not have anything to say to you, offer them what you will; in this case they

are only sporting, not feeding at all ; but continue fishing nevertheless, for they may change at any moment from play to earnest and commence feeding ; but it is generally after their play *has subsided* that your sport commences ; you will soon learn how to distinguish when they are rising freely at fly from this kind of play.

I know no prettier fishing than on good grayling water, when there is a good rise of one of their favorite flies, and they are steadily on feed. They herd together in shoals, and a couple of hundred yards of water is often sufficient for an afternoon's fishing. A hooked fish, darting through a shoal does not seem to frighten grayling in the same way that it does other fish.

I have fished most of the grayling rivers in England, and give the palm to the Lugg, in Herefordshire, for the size and number of its fish, with the exception (perhaps) of that portion of the Teme preserved by the Leintwardine Club, which was some years ago quite the best.

Grayling do not often run at the minnow, but they do so on very rare occasions. I once caught three in one day with a small brass minnow on the river Arrow, and they were all *fairly hooked in the mouth*, but have only taken four others in my lifetime.

I believe that in rivers where grayling are very plenti-

ful, trout are to a certain extent diminished, but account for it solely on the principle that a river will only supply a certain number of fish with food.

I do not believe, beyond taking their share of that food, that the grayling do the slightest harm to the trout or their spawn. If I was the owner of a *first-rate* trout stream, I should never wish to introduce grayling into it; but in ordinary streams I should very much prefer having both fish.

CHAPTER V.

WHITE TROUT FISHING.

PLAY OF—FLIES FOR—DRESSINGS FOR TWO FLIES—CAST
—ROD—HABITS OF—PREFERENCE AS TO FLY—PROOF OF
—STRIKING—PLAYING.

WHEN this is good, there is no fishing, in my estimation, to equal it. The fish is such a sporting one, his play is so lively and so varied, and altogether he dies so hard; besides, you often find him in medium sized streams as well as large rivers, and in the former, I always fancy they show more sport.

It is not necessary that a number of different flies should be imitated, as in the case of brown trout, for the white trout does not feed on one particular fly at a time to the eschewal of all others.

The bodies of white trout flies should generally be made of bright floss silks, or a stuff called philozel. Crimson, bright orange, brown, and lemon, are the best colours, ribbed with gold or silver tinsel—the latter for

preference. Wings, of any mixed and speckled feathers. The size of the hook, according to the water. No. 6, is a good average size. I have always found, however, that imitations of some of the actual flies will kill as well as these. The March brown, slightly ribbed with gold wire, kills well in autumn. It may be tied on hooks from No. 2 to No. 6; and there is no better fly than the orange palmer, whilst the February red, the great red spinner, and the coachman will all kill in autumn. In very clear low water the general flies No. 3, tied on No. 9 hook, are good. When a very large fly is used to lead in heavy water, it is best to have only one dropper; but when using flies not larger than No. 6, I always fish with four flies, and in fine water two of them are the above general flies dressed as follows:—

1st—Hook No. 9; occasionally No. 8. Body, reddish brown silk, (not floss) wrapped about three-quarters up the hook, and finish off with three or four turns of bronze peacock's herl tied fat. Tip, gold tinsel, and a speckled brown hen's hackle.

2nd—Body, first either claret or dark orange silk, finished off with herl, as above. Tip, silver tinsel, and a glossy black hackle.

The hackles on these flies should be rather longer than the hook, and with rather thick fibres. Always attach your drop flies to the cast with a loop, as described elsewhere.

A light double-handed rod should be used; about fourteen feet is long enough; it is poor sport killing a three or four pound fish on a salmon rod, or even on a sixteen foot grilse rod. For lake fishing, a single-handed rod does very well, and it should be made entirely of greenheart.

The cast should be from four to five yards long, of good round gut. In clear water it ought to be as fine as the fisherman thinks he can use with safety, on which point he must be guided by the nature of the water and by the estimation in which he holds his own skill.

It is better to work the flies something like a salmon fly, but in a shorter quicker manner; but in this as well as in all other kinds of fly fishing, fish *as deep as possible*.

Always make a point of fishing any flat silently gliding water *just above* a fall or rapid stream which is a likely find.

In rivers, it is hardly ever necessary or desirable to strike at white trout, raising the rod's point simultaneously with the rise being sufficient. It is better not to play

them quite so heavily as you would other fish, but of course kill as soon as you can.

Although white trout do not exercise the same epicureanism in regard to flies as their brown *confrères*, I am still of opinion that they have sometimes what may be termed an unanimity of preference for a particular fly.

I fished one whole day in autumn a river on which the August dun was out strong. I had on my cast a March brown, and three others, orthodox white trout flies. I killed thirty-three white trout, and twenty-nine of them took *the March brown*. In the morning it was placed as first dropper, but in the afternoon I changed its position to that of stretcher. Now I think this is a clear proof, that, on this day at least, the fish shewed a most decided partiality for *a particular fly*. The water on this occasion was as clear as crystal, and I have always observed that fish are most fastidious as to what fly they take when this is the case.

I never fish for sea trout with the natural minnow, but they will take the artificial minnow mentioned in the chapter on minnow fishing very well indeed, especially in the smaller streams. It should be made of the silvery metal, not brass, and the smallest size is the best.

The Sewen of Wales should be fished for as above.

CHAPTER VI.

MINNOW FISHING IN SMALL RIVERS AND BROOKS.

THE TIME TO USE MINNOW—THE ROD—REEL—LINE—
ARTIFICIAL VERSUS NATURAL MINNOW—HOW TO CATCH
MINNOWS—THE ARTIFICIAL—WATER FOR—HOW TO FISH
—WEATHER—PLACES TO FISH—FENCE TIMES—NATURAL
MINNOW FISHING ON LARGE RIVERS.

THE best time to use the minnow is early in the morning, although the fish will sometimes run all day long, providing that the sun is not very bright; the evening is also good up to a certain time; they do not run well very late, and they hardly ever take minnow in very cold weather. The test of the temperature of the first fish caught, given in Chapter I., is a greater criterion of the chances of sport than even in fly fishing. During the May fly season, the trout nearly always take the minnow very kindly, both morning and evening.

Use a light rod about thirteen feet long with upright rings and rather stiffer than a stiff fly-rod, but with a

certain amount of play in it. It should always be made *ferruled*, not spliced; and this also applies to all rods for trolling from a boat, or grasshoppering, or in fact any fishing, except fly.

A very fine dressed silk line and a plain reel, either with or without a check.

Now, with regard to the minnow itself, until six or seven years ago, I always used the natural minnow, but having then met and fished with a very first-rate minnow fisherman, he quite convinced me that the artificial was much superior, and since that time I have never used any other for small waters, such as I am now writing about. The minnow I employ is an ordinary brass kill-devil, and I sometimes have it made of some silvery metal for a change. I would always back myself with this against anyone using the natural minnow, and in all conditions of water. The reason that the artificial has obtained a bad reputation for killing is that few men have any faith in it, and, therefore, if they do not kill on first using it, they say, "Oh, it is no good," and do not try it again.

But the artificial should always be an *ordinary metal one*, like the one presently to be described, or something of the same kind. I have no faith whatever in any of

the artificials made exactly to represent a fish for *trout fishing*, although, with the larger sizes, I have killed pike fairly.

The advantages of the artificial are—

1stly—You have not to change your minnows.

2ndly—The artificial spins far better than the natural, and has a far more enticing, and *even more natural* appearance in the water.

3rdly—You are saved all the trouble of procuring baits, which cannot always be done at the time you intend fishing.

Added to these advantages, my experience has taught me, that at every time and in every water that the fish will take the natural bait, they will also run at the artificial; whilst, on the other hand, you can often kill with the artificial, when they would not look at the natural. There is one objection nearly always urged against the use of the artificial, viz., that if a fish seizes the bait and is missed, he will not come again. I think this objection holds good in the case of pike, or large trout, in lakes, &c.; but trout of from half to two pounds weight, in small running streams, do not often return to the attack after missing their prey, or, when they do so, it is *so quickly* after the first rush that they have not time to arrive at the conclusion that they had bitten at metal

instead of fish. One great reason for missing fish, when using the artificial, is that most of those sold are made with pectoral fins much too large; these should be only just large enough to make the bait spin well, and no more. The trace should be two-and-a-half yards long, of good round gut of a medium stoutness and slightly stained, with one small double swivel, about two-and-a-half feet from the bait; the minnow is heavy enough of itself, without any extra lead.

The minnow I use is made in the shape shewn in the cut, either of brass or german silver, and the most useful size is that given; one size larger, and one smaller are necessary for different conditions of water.

The arming consists of four triangles, two tail, and two side hooks. The tail triangles are whipped on to the gut forming the trace, running right through the minnow, and do not spin with the minnow itself, and a large bead should be placed above them, as shewn in the cut. The side triangles

should be whipped on strong gut, passed through holes in the body of minnow, as shewn, these spin with the minnow itself.

With the exception of the holes made for the gut, on which the triangles are whipped to pass through, the body of the minnow should be solid.

When fishing where there are any pike, it is advisable to fasten the triangles on fine silver gimp, or perhaps the gut gimp mentioned in pike fishing.

Thick water is not good for minnow fishing; when a river has *nearly* cleared after a fresh is generally the best, but on a cloudy day fish will often run very well at the artificial in the clearest water, as long as the fisherman is not seen, and in this fact consists one of its great superiorities. Always, as a rule, fish *up-stream*, throwing the bait up, and as near the opposite bank as possible, and allowing it to fall quite gently into the water, with a line as long, or a foot or two longer, than the rod; then draw it down stream, keeping the rod's point about six inches from the water, and the minnow as *close as possible under* the bank, having taken as long a sweep down stream as you are able to do, turn your wrist and draw the minnow up stream, towards the middle water, and in the direction of the spot where you are standing. These

metal minnows spin so well that it is not necessary to draw them too quick through the water, even when they are travelling down stream. I am writing on the supposition that the fisherman is wading, for it is impossible to work the minnow properly from the bank, in confined and wooded streams and brooks, and the places that are open are seldom worth trying. The accompanying

diagram gives the line that ought to be taken by the bait.

D is where the fisherman is standing. The stream running down from A to B. The bait should enter the water at A, and be drawn down *close under* the bank E to B, and then brought up to C. The brass minnow should al-

ways be used in clear water, and the silver one occasionally when there is a stain in the water.

Trout are even more capricious at the minnow than they are at the fly. I have often during a whole day brought fish after fish out from under the banks and following my bait up to my very feet, without getting one run, whilst on other days they will come like bulldogs, and you hardly miss one, and on others they run at the bait, but in a very undecided way, and you miss killing several that are slightly hooked.

When minnow fishing throughout the day a good ripple on the water is always advantageous. I prefer a boisterous day, *providing it is warm*, but in the early mornings, and also in the evening it is better that it should be warm and calm.

The first yard or two from the heads of streams is the most likely place to get a run, and anywhere that the bank much overhangs the river, or where there is any shallow still water on one side of a deep stream. But one of the first qualifications necessary before becoming a workman at this style of fishing is to have a good eye for minnow water. It is a very uncommon thing to meet a real good fisherman with the minnow who can work his bait properly in cramped wooded streams and brooks; for one who can fish thus, you find numbers of fair performers with the fly. Whenever you see a fish

following the bait, spin steadily on, neither faster nor slower than before, if he does not take try for him immediately again, with your bait travelling through *all* the same water that it did in your first spin. Never try *more* than twice for the same fish.

When the fish takes the minnow I always strike, but not the jerky sharp strike of the fly rod. Immediately you *feel* him, raise the rod's point firmly up and hold the fish very hard and severely for a moment before playing him, which you must do according to the way he is hooked. A trout when badly hooked with the minnow almost invariably springs out of the water, and makes higher leaps than he often does when hooked with fly. When fishing very thickly-wooded streams you often come to a fall with a rapid stream flowing below it, and continuing rapid water some distance; the bushes will just admit of your getting to the head of the fall, but it is too deep to wade any further down. You are also unable to work this place (which is sure to be a likely one) from below. Having fished just below the fall in the usual way, throw the minnow into the rough water and let it go down slowly with the stream to the end of the rapid water, in its descent you must work it with the rod, and then bring it slowly up against stream, trying first

one side and then the other, either by winding in the line with the reel, or a better plan is gathering it in your hand, as is often done when spinning for pike; the bait spins more evenly and continuously when the last plan is followed.

When the fish run well minnow fishing is very good sport, but if you do not get a run at all, after having tried three or four likely places, the probability is that you will have no sport.

On all really good fly-fishing streams minnow ought to be prohibited until July, then I think a little of it does good, as you kill large fish that are not often taken with fly, and that are much better *out of the water*. It is curious in preservation how little attention is paid to the fact that an unusually large trout in a small stream is *as bad* as a pike.

I do not often fish with minnow on large rivers, preferring the fly even in the early mornings, but when I do I always use the natural minnow, because a different method of fishing should be employed on very large waters from that above described, and the small metal artificial is not adapted for it.

In natural minnow fishing *large hook* tackles are always preferable to flights made of triangles only.

I will here mention a good plan to get a few minnows when you are in a hurry. Having put on your wading things walk into any water about two-and-a-half feet deep, where you see a shoal of minnows and stand perfectly still; they will take very little notice of you and with a small meshed landing net you may take out as many as you require; it is a good plan to kill one and throw it into the water within reach; this attracts the others.

When minnow fishing it is advisable to use a small gaff in the place of a landing net, as the hooks catch in the latter. A large sized salmon hook with part of the barb filed off, whipped on to a short stick, with a small spring hook to hang on the basket strap, is all that is necessary; as a rule you will only require to use it for a large fish, for it requires a good deal of practice to gaff a small fish dexterously, as anyone will discover on his first attempt at inserting it into a three-quarter pound trout.

CHAPTER VII.

FLY FISHING FOR COARSE FISH.

DACE FISHING—RIVERS FOR—LARGE FISH—FLIES FOR
—CHUB FISHING—WEIGHTING FLIES—LARGE FISH—
ROACH—PERCH—PIKE—WHERE TO FISH FOR PIKE—
HOW TO MAKE A PIKE FLY—FOREIGN FISH.

To an enthusiast about fly fishing there is always a certain amount of gratification in throwing his line on any water where there is a probability of fish of any kind rising to his flies. I have often found amusement in fishing with fly for many kinds of fish in various parts of the world, and on rivers in which there were no salmon or grayling, and no, or at any rate only a very occasional, trout.

Dace. Dace fishing, where they are in numbers and run large, is very good amusement. The best rivers in England for them to my knowledge are the Wye in Herefordshire, the Usk and the Avon in Somersetshire which hold quantities of them. I have often on warm evenings, and also very early in the mornings, caught

large basketsful, several of them being half-a-pound, and now and then one of three-quarters of a pound in weight. The largest I ever killed just turned one pound in the scale.

The play of a dace for its size is very good indeed ; you should use a stiffish rod and strike the moment you perceive a rise. When fishing for dace and all kinds of coarse fish, always *exactly cover a rise*, not throw a little over it as for trout. August is the best month for dace fishing with fly. I always fish with a hair cast, and use four small flies : the red ant, silver and mulberry duns, small black palmer and general fly, No. 4, are the best dace flies, but by far the most killing one I ever used was one I bought some years ago at Alfred's, in Moorgate Street. It was something like a small black palmer, but had a bit of shiny shell-looking substance at the tail.

Chub. Fishing for this fish with fly is hardly fly fishing properly speaking, but it sometimes wiles away time when there is nothing better to be had.

Chub lie chiefly under the banks, especially where they are overhung with trees, and the fly ought to be cast quite close to the bank, and then worked towards the middle water. The flies I always use are the orl, governor, orange palmer, and general fly, No. 5, tied

large ; the last is the most killing. The cast should be three yards of good gut. I always use two flies placed one-and-a-half yards apart, and with the one to be employed as stretcher adopt the following plan : After having whipped the gut to the hook, I cover the shank with a little lead, and then wrap the body material of the fly on over this, which causes the fly to sink deeply and is a great advantage.

A fourteen foot, rather stiff, double-handed rod is the best to use for this work.

The first rush of a large chub is good, after that he gives little play.

There is fair sport to be had with chub in a great number of rivers on the Continent, and in the same waters you often find grayling. I have often killed chub in England up to three pounds weight, but very seldom any larger. The two largest I ever killed were one of five pounds and ten ounces ; this was killed with fly in the Avon ; and one of four pounds and fourteen ounces killed on the Lugg with a minnow, but I have never fished in the Thames for them, where, I believe, they are sometimes taken up to six or seven pounds. Do not strike at the rise of a chub, but let the line tighten first and then strike hard.

Roach. Will take a fly sometimes, but they show no sport. In streams they may be fished for in the same way as dace, but in slow gliding water the best plan is to lead a small fly, as described for chub, and let it sink very deep, and then draw it rather slowly up to the surface.

Perch. I believe in some places perch are sometimes taken with a fly, and abroad I have killed a few although only *small* ones, but in England I have never succeeded in taking or even rising a single fish, although I have very often tried for them; if the large ones would take fly they ought to show good sport.

Pike. On all waters where there are rushes at the sides, in which aquatic birds make their nests, pike can be fished for with the fly, and a large pike on a salmon rod is very good sport. I once had one over twenty pounds on Lough Corrib in Ireland.

The fly should be cast into the rushes, and then worked directly towards you by short quick pulls, raising and sinking the top of the rod.

The fly is taken by the pike in all probability for *the young of water-fowl*, and the things generally made and sold for pike flies, all tinsel, peacock's feathers and glass beads, are no attempt at imitating these. Take a

long-shanked double hook, it is not necessary to have the hooks themselves so very large, so long as there is plenty of room on the shank on which to construct a very large fly, but they must be *very sharp* as your rod (which ought to be a stiffish salmon one of not less than eighteen foot) is not so severe in the strike as an ordinary pike rod.

On to the above hook whip two long strands of single salmon gut. Make the body of the fly of yellowish pigswool and any blueish fur well mixed, wrapped on *very* thick and fat, and making it very rough and hairy.

Wings: two very large equal sized slips of any grey feather, tied one on each side and rather low down on the body, and over this a tolerable sized head of black ostrich herl.

This makes a very fair imitation of a young duckling, and if a pike has at any recent period tasted one of these delicacies he is sure to come at it.

Now as to protecting the strands of gut on which the hook is tied from the teeth of the pike. The plan I have always used was to wrap them for about six inches from the hook, first with worsted, and over that very tightly with well waxed silk, and then varnish. I have always found this sufficient protection, the worsted and silk seeming quite capable of resisting the teeth, but on

lately reading Mr. Pennell, on "Pike Fishing," I came across a mention made by him of what he calls gut-gimp, that is gut covered with fine wire. Now, since seeing this I have not had an opportunity of testing it for fishing for pike with fly, but feel convinced that it is just the right thing on which to tie the fly. Of course with this you would only require about six inches of the gut from the hook covered with the wire.

Ordinary gimp does not answer at all for several reasons.

For the trace have one-and-a-half yards of the stoutest single salmon gut, and one yard of twisted gut. It is better to use a heavy line as it has to cast so bulky a fly. When the fish takes the fly strike *straight up*, and as hard as you possibly can with safety to the rod, and keep a very heavy hold of him for a moment before allowing him any line. A boisterous, windy day is the best for this fishing. When rowing about a lake from place to place allow the fly to trail behind the boat, it is sometimes taken in that position.

I think I have alluded to all the kinds of coarse fish that can be taken with the fly in England, but in other countries there are many kinds of fish that rise greedily to fly.

CHAPTER VIII.

GRASSHOPPER FISHING.

FALLACIES ABOUT—FISHING FOR GRAYLING—WATER FOR—FISHERMAN—ROD—LINE—CAST—THE GRASSHOPPER—QUILL MARK—SEASONS—HOW TO WORK—PLACES TO FISH—WHAT IT IS TAKEN FOR—FISH KILLED WITH IT—PERCH—JACK—A GRASSHOPPER FOR PIKE.

I HAVE always wondered why this style of fishing is not more popular, for it is very good sport when fly cannot be used, and will kill grayling on *every water* containing them all over the world, in spite of all local fishermen may say to the contrary. They will tell you, "Oh, it has been tried here and is not the slightest use," the fact being that some complete novice had once tried it for about an hour or so. I have tried it on numbers of streams about which I have been told this, and never failed killing. Of course some waters are much better adapted for it than others, and on some days you will get

no runs at all, as in all other kinds of fishing ; but if the water is in order, that is *quite clear*, it is no use for grayling when it is at all colored, although you may kill coarse fish with it in water slightly stained. On a September or October morning, after a frosty night, you seldom fail to kill some fish, and the largest grayling take this lure.

The best fishermen in this line are to be found in Herefordshire and Shropshire, but even there it is not employed to any very great extent, and there are few men who fish it really well.

The *modus operandi* is :—Use a sixteen feet cane rod, with upright rings, and as light as possible, for it is very fatiguing work with a heavy rod. I always use a rod of light cane, twenty feet long ; and anyone taking to this kind of fishing will soon discover the advantage of great length ; but sixteen feet is long enough to begin with.

A very *fine* plaited silk line, and three yards of good stained gut about the thickness of a medium trout cast.

The grasshopper itself is made as follows :—Cover the shank of a Limerick bend hook with lead after having whipped a gut loop on to it, and then wrap on over it with grass green worsted or a stuff called philozel of the same colour, the latter is best, and ribbed distinctly with

light yellow worsted, then fasten a small strip of straw on each side with dark waxed silk. The lead ought to be filed rough all over its surface which keeps the worsted in its place. The grasshopper should be of the size and form shown in cut, fig. 1. On

the gut line place a small float, or rather mark, for it is not intended to float. The simplest way is to cut an inch, or an inch-and-a-half of quill, and insert in it a piece of the white pith of the stem after having passed the

line through it; this keeps it in its place as in cut, fig. 2.

When at the water side, bait the barb of the hook with a live grasshopper, when this can be procured, by inserting the hook between its shoulders; and if you have no grasshoppers, with two or three gentles or a cabbage grub. The best way to carry grasshoppers is in a soda water bottle with a little grass, then you can get them out one at a time.

Fix the quill mark on the line according to the depth of water to be fished. Supposing the water to be four feet deep, I should place the mark three feet from the bait, or one foot less than the depth. With a line rather shorter than the rod, throw the bait in near the bank,

allowing it to sink *quite* to the bottom, then bring it up again with a succession of sharp, jerky motions of the wrist to about six inches from the surface, and let it sink again, slightly moving its position. In its descent it should always be slightly restrained, so as to cause the stream to carry it in a *slanting* direction from the top of the rod.

The eye must be kept on the mark, and, on the bait being seized, this will be raised up, and the strike must be made at once like lightening and rather severely, and the fish played heavily.

In shallow streams the mark should be placed six inches, or one foot *deeper* than the water, and kept *above* the surface so as to indicate the depth to fish. The great point is, that the grasshopper should *exactly touch the bottom* before it is jerked up again.

It is very difficult to describe in a manner so plain as to be thoroughly understood the exact mode of using this bait. It requires to watch some good hand at work to enter thoroughly into it; and it also requires a great deal of practice before becoming a proficient at it, and able to use a line longer than the rod, and to work the centre of the river without wading, and on frosty mornings that is not desirable; but when wading in the middle of the day, work the water all round you.

The water I prefer when fishing for grayling is slow gliding streams three or four feet deep ; but this bait will kill them in any kind of water. The best times for grayling are the early mornings in September and October, especially after a frosty night ; but they will often take it nearly all day long if it is cloudy. It is no use whatever on a bright day, and with this bait, as with fly, in general grayling take it either well or not at all.

My own idea is, that fish take this bait for some sort of caterpillar ; and, although, when the hook is baited with a *grasshopper*, grayling take it with, perhaps, a little more avidity than when gentles or anything else is used. I fancy this is to be entirely attributed to the grasshoppers imparting *more life* to the bait, not to the fact of its being that particular insect, for one of the advantages of this fishing is, that almost anything will do to cover the hook with, a small piece of the fat of meat, &c., and I have killed grayling with only a small green leaf on the hook.

I am of opinion that every description of fish will take this bait, more or less, having myself killed with it—in England—grayling, trout, jack, perch, chub, dace, roach, on two occasions carp, and one bream. I have also used it two or three times for coarse fish in India with fair success.

When fishing for perch, which in some waters take it very greedily, the hook should be covered with a small red worm, or a piece of one; and for jack, with a piece of a lobworm. In fishing for jack, the grasshopper ought to be made twice; and for pike, three times as large as usual, and tied on rather fine gimp; but when I next try it I shall use the *gut gimp*, recommended by Mr. Pennell to be occasionally used for pike tackle. Small jack sometimes take this bait very well.

Six-and-a-half pounds is the largest pike I have ever killed with it, but I have once or twice hooked larger, and have never fished any really good pike water with it, as the places which contain large pike, and where it can be properly worked are limited; but I should always try it, where I had the opportunity, in preference to the atrocious gorge bait often used in this kind of water. For pike fishing the rod must be strong, as you require to strike very hard, and sixteen feet long.

If any fly fisherman takes the trouble of acquiring this mode of fishing, I do not think he will regret having done so, as it will often afford him amusement on rivers, or at times when he cannot use the fly; and although it may sound very easy, there is really a good deal of skill required to fish the grasshopper very well.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW TO TIE A FLY.

TYING VERSUS BUYING FLIES — ADVICE TO BUYERS — AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL TYERS — WOMEN TYERS — NEATNESS — SIZE — COMPARING FLIES — PREPARING HACKLES — MATERIALS — DROP FLIES — TYING IN WINTER — SILKS — HOOKS — MAKING A FLY — THE PROCESS DESCRIBED — A WINGED FLY — A BUZZ FLY — TYING BY WATER SIDE.

For every man who ties his own flies, there are hundreds who always buy them; and there are few who have either time or inclination to do the former, even if they possessed the necessary amount of skill; but everyone who takes a pleasure in fly fishing ought to be able to tie a fly, if it is only as a pattern for others to be dressed from, otherwise he is obliged to put up with any imitations he can get hold of, very often not bearing the slightest resemblance to the natural flies, and his success is a matter of luck, not skill.

It must also be borne in mind, that the man who can tie a fly fairly can also make or mend very nearly every description of fishing tackle, and is thus rendered quite independent. To those who only fish occasionally and always buy their flies, the best advice I can give is—Find out some good fly-tyer, and go to him for your flies; but having arrived at the river you intend fishing, procure a few flies from a local fisherman such as he considers best at that season, and send them off to your own man telling him to dress you some like them; for the flies you get from the local professional will, in all probability, be tied on wretched gut.

But a still better plan than this (although I give the advice) is, before you start on your fishing expedition, to have some of all the flies for the particular month or months in which you are going to fish tied exactly after the dressings given for them in this book. I will engage that you find some of them on the water *wherever* the river you are bound for may be situated, and that they will kill quite as well, if not better, than any that local fishermen can supply you with.

I will now try to give a few hints to those who make, or wish to make, their own flies.

Flies made by amateurs for their own use last much

longer than the generality of bought ones, and are not so liable to draw; but where a really *practical* fisherman has tied flies for many years *for sale*, and in very large quantities (supposing I approved of his imitations), I would rather use his flies than those tied by myself or any amateur, for this reason—a professional fly-tyer who makes a great number of flies, and makes them *all good representations of actual flies*, is sure to have a much better stock of materials than the amateur, and his flies are consequently more *uniform*.

A large proportion of the flies sold are tied by women; and, although they tie with great neatness, a woman's wrist is not strong enough to insure a fly not drawing; for in whipping the gut on to the hook, the strain on the silk, and that strain as great as it will bear, ought never to be slackened in the very slightest degree from the first turn of the whipping until it is finished off. If a man did this part of the process, a woman might finish the fly; but where they do part, they invariably do the whole; but I believe that it requires a *fisherman* to tie a *killing* fly, even when he has a pattern to copy from.

In regard to a fly's killing, great neatness is only necessary, as far as it is required for security from drawing, or to make the imitation more perfect; as for instance,

the imitations of the willows, green insects, wrentails, sky-blue, and one or two other flies ought to be tied very neatly, and with very small heads, because in their case the fly itself is better represented thus, but in very many others the likeness is often entirely sacrificed, in order to make what is called a very neat fly. One celebrated fly-tyer makes his flies *so neat* that I would not use most of them for any consideration.

The artificial should be dressed the same size as the average size of the natural fly it is meant to represent, dressing a fly on a No. 10 or 11 hook as a representation of such flies as the February red, or stone fly is an utter absurdity; but as it is impossible to fish a large fly properly on very fine gut when the water is very low and clear, you should limit yourself to using any of the smaller kinds that may be out.

For all flies tied buzz or without wings, always use rough materials such as furs, worsted, crewel, &c. instead of silks for the bodies, and that part should be made rather shorter and fatter than in the same fly when winged.

To compare the imitation when finished with its prototype, press the wings and hackle down flat to the body, and hold them down to the barb end of the hook be-

tween the finger and thumb. Do the same by the actual fly, and hold them both up to the light, you will then be best able to judge as to whether you have hit off the exact colors, &c.

When using fur, pigswool, mohair or crewel for a body, take a sufficient quantity of the material and work it into a strand, twist it round the tying silk, and then wind on both together. Herl and worsted are better wound on alone. For fly tying, the best varnish is made of orange shellac, dissolved in spirits of wine. The mixture should not be too thick.

If the cobblers' wax to be used for the tying silks is too brittle, a little tallow should be worked up with it, but it is better when this can be dispensed with.

One most important matter in fly tying is, that the silk for tying should be well waxed, and when using very fine silk, to do this properly, requires some practice. In a cold atmosphere, wax will not draw properly on to the silk. When fly making in winter, I have a very small tin cup in which I place the wax, and then float it on a basin of hot water; but even with this plan you cannot make flies as well in cold as in warm weather. For large flies or salmon flies, the best silk I know for tying is sewing-machine silk, but for small flies you require silk both very fine, and yet of a certain strength, and tight twist. This silk is very difficult to procure good.

When tying a very small fly, take a length of fine silk and wax it well, then double half its length; whip the gut on to the hook with this doubled part, leaving a single strand hanging to tie the fly with.

Always be very careful to get the very best hooks. A great many bought flies are tied on very bad ones. For very small flies the hooks should always be fine in the wire; and for all sizes of trout and grayling flies, *too heavy hooks* are a mistake. For all the smaller sizes, that is from No. 9 and upwards, I prefer the sneck-bend, and for larger sizes, the Carlisle bend. The hackle should be fastened in at the same time as the gut is whipped on the hook, except in the case of a fly with a silk body, when it may be fastened in at the same time as the silk is wrapped on for the body.

Fig. 7

To prepare a hackle, snip the fibres on both sides for a short distance; at the thin end, slightly damp the feather, and give the fibres an inclination in a contrary direction to their natural lay as shown in fig. 7.

As regards the materials for dressing flies, the best plan is not to adhere quite closely to any particular stuffs, furs, hackles or feathers, but to make

the fly of *anything* that strikes you as likely to imitate it best. This advice is only intended for amateurs. Professional fly-tyers ought to turn out their flies always exactly the same as to pattern. The dressings of the different flies, given in this book, are what I nearly always myself use ; but it occasionally happens that one chances on a piece of stuff or a feather exactly what you want to imitate some particular fly on a river where that fly is of a darker or lighter shade than usual.

Flies intended to be used as droppers should always be tied on stouter gut than those for stretchers. A vice to hold the hook I have never found of any use, it is always better to tie with your fingers only. All you require are a small pair of spring tweezers and a pair of sharply pointed scissors.

And now to tie a fly.

1st. To whip the gut on to the hook. Having notched the end of the former between your teeth, take two turns of the tying silk round the shank of the hook, then lay the gut along the shank, and take two or three turns round both, remembering to leave as much of the end of the shank bare as you will require to finish off your fly on. Twist the gut right round the shank of the hook. This prevents its drawing. Whip on to the bend, and finish with one knot, leaving the end of silk with which to tie the fly hanging ; varnish and leave until quite dry before proceeding any farther.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

2nd. Having whipped the gut on to the hook, and fastened in your hackle, as in fig. 1,* lay on to your hook:— 1st, the tinsel A ; 2nd, the tail B ; 3rd, the body C. Take two or three turns round them tightly with the tying silk E, and carry it up to the head, as in fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

3rd. Now wrap the body material tightly round the hook, and take one turn of the tying silk round it. The wax should be sufficient to hold it there. Over this wind the tinsel neatly and evenly, and take a turn of the tying silk round both, as in fig. 3.

* NOTE.—By an error of the draughtsman, the hackle feather has been fastened in at the *wrong end*. See ties 2 and 3, which are right.

4th. Take the end of the hackle between the spring tweezers, and wind it evenly round to the head, pressing the fibres down until they take a slanting direction towards the tail. Take one or two turns and one knot of tying

Fig. 4.

silk round this, and touch this knot with varnish. After winding on the hackle, by letting the tweezers hang down attached to the end of it, their weight will keep all tight, until you fasten the silk, as in fig. 4.

5th. Now take a slip of a feather, the size required, and as it were, mould it into the proper shape for a wing; press the bottom part close together, and laying it on to the head of the fly, and giving it the proper set, take a turn or two of the tying silk very tightly round it, and finish off with two or three knots—the last number, when practicable, clip all close, and varnish the head, and you have a complete winged fly with tinsel and tail, as in fig. 5.

Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.

Of course, having accomplished this to make an ordinary buzz fly without wings, tail or tinsel, is very simple.

1st. Fasten on material for body.

2nd. Wrap it up to the head.

3rd. Wind up hackle and finish off, as in fig. 6.

I have tried to make my explanation of the process as clear as possible, but a novice should always try and get a lesson from some proficient; and, after that, I think by the aid of the directions here given, he ought soon to be able to tie a fly himself.

Tying a fly by the *water side*, is a thing only to be talked about by some would-be great fisherman. I have never done such a thing myself, and in the whole course of my experience, I have never seen it done by any one else.

For even if you lugged about the materials for fly tying with you, when you went to fish, by the time you had tied a fly, *the rise of the particular one* you were so anxious to imitate, would most likely be over.

ARTIFICIAL FLIES AND THEIR DRESSINGS.

THE following list of flies and their dressings, also the seasons, time, weather and water in which to use

them are derived from my own experience in fly fishing. Of course my ideas of most of the proper dressings for each fly were originally taken from imitations tied by local or other fishermen, and with more or less variation are now given. But with three exceptions—the bumble, the dotterel and the furnace flies. I have used these imitations for some years, and can answer for their killing at least as well as any other patterns. The actual flies have, of course, always been known to fishermen, more or less, under one name or another.

When silk ribbings require waxing, common yellow wax should be used.

When a body is described as being *distinctly ribbed* with tinsel or silk, it means that the ribbing should be quite apparent, and evenly wound on, not buried in the body material, in which case it is described as *imperceptibly ribbed*.

The term coch-y-bondhu hackle is used for a parti-coloured hackle, such as red and black or red and orange, &c.

When a body is directed to be tied fat, it should be rather fuller in the middle of the fly than at either the tail or head, and when the body of a fly is directed to be wound on rather thicker at the head than at the tail, it should be made in the shape of a carrot.

A scale of hooks is given as a reference for the different sizes mentioned. The scale is near enough to give an idea of the proper sized hooks to be employed for each fly. But as I have no proper scale to guide me, they are not supposed to be a scale of hooks used by makers.

1. *The Blue Dun*. This is one of the best flies that comes out, and it can be used on cold days all through the season, but is on the water especially from November to the end of March. There are a number of other names, such as hare's ear, upright, &c., and also very many dressings for this fly, and most of the patterns of it will kill occasionally. But the following are the best, it should be dressed both winged and buzz, or with hackle only.

Tied for spring.

Hooks, Nos. 9, 10 and 11.

Body : Greenish olive crewel and hare's ear mixed, ribbed with olive silk, very slightly waxed.

A dark blue dun hen's hackle.

Tail, two strands of same.

Wing, a dark slip of starling's feather.

For autumn.

Hooks, No. 10 and 11.

Body : Dark olive silk, ribbed with yellow silk, very slightly waxed.

A dark blue dun hen's hackle.

Tail, two strands of same.

Wing, rather lighter than for spring.

Dressed buzz. Hooks, Nos. 11, 12 and 13.

Body as for spring, but without ribbing, and tied rather fat.

A blue dun hen's hackle.

This last is a good fly at any time on a cold day The blue dun will kill in all parts of the world.

2. *The February Red* comes out in February and March, and is one of the very first flies out in the season, but is much more plentiful on some rivers than on others. It kills in both clear and coloured waters. On large rivers, it is a good fly to use the end of September and October. It may be dressed on hooks, according to the state of the water, from No. 5 to 9.

No. 8 is a good general size.

It is a great, although general mistake, to tie this fly *too small*, besides being a bad imitation of the original. Tied on a No. 8 hook, this fly will kill on rivers where only the very smallest flies are generally used.

Body : Brick coloured red pigswool, tied roughly.

Red hackle.

Wing : A light mottled slip of hen pheasant's wing.

The wing of this fly is often imitated with a speckled black and white feather, this is not at all correct, as an imitation of the actual fly, but on large rivers it will often kill as a general fly.

3. *The Cowdung* is a land-bred fly, and like all others of that kind, is only useful on a windy day. It is to be found by the sides of nearly, if not quite, all the rivers in England, wherever there are any cattle in the meadows. It is useful on boisterous days in spring, it can also be used for fishing close to the sides in high waters, it should always be used as a stretcher fly.

Hooks, Nos. 8 and 9.

It sometimes kills when tied on a No. 10 hook, but the larger sizes are generally best, on account of the weather or water in which it is used.

Body : Yellowish orange mohair, tied fat and rough.

A light ginger-coloured hackle.

Wing: A light slip of landrail's feather.

4. *The March Brown.* This fly is one of the very best for the fisherman that ever comes out, and can be used from the time it first appears in March, until the end of April; on large rivers it also kills in autumn. On small streams use the August dun instead at that time. For lakes when slightly ribbed with gold wire, it is always an excellent fly. The female of this fly is lighter in shade than the male, but is not worth imitating.

If you wish to fish with two March browns, use for a dropper the general fly, No. 6.

Hook, according to water, Nos. 8 and 9 are good general sizes.

Body: Hare's ear, ribbed distinctly with yellow silk.

Tail: Three strands of any mottled brown feather.

Hackle, partridge.

Wing: A dark mottled slip of pheasant's wing.

When the fly is tied *very large*, the feather of a hen turkey is better for the wing, but the very best March brown wing, when it can be procured, is from the wing feather of a hen capercalzie.

5. *The Grandam, or Greentail*, comes out some time in April, and lasts about ten days. It derives its name from

a mass of green eggs at its tail, and is a fly easily imitated. It is a local fly, but where found, greedily taken by the fish, the same sort of fly comes out much later in the season, but I have never found it at that time of the slightest use. I never knew the fish to take this fly, *from recollection*, it should be used only when the original is strongly on the water, which is generally for about half-an-hour at a time.

Hooks, No. 10 and 11.

Body : Lightish fur of the hare's ear, over this at the tail end, take two or three turn of grass, green worsted.

Hackle : Any greyish hackle.

Wing : A light *grey* slip of hen pheasant's wing feather.

6. *The Spider Fly, or Gravel Bed*, comes out in April, it does not frequent all rivers, but where found is in very great numbers. I have killed well with this fly in Herefordshire, but in Derbyshire, where they abound, I could never do much good with it. It is best used when only *a few* of the original are on the water.

Hooks, Nos. 10 and 11.

Body : Lead coloured floss silk.

A black hackle, very long in the fibre and sparsely wound on.

Wings: A mottled slip from the lightest underneath part of a woodcock's wing feather.

7. *The Iron Blue* comes out in April, and also in autumn generally for a short period at a time after a shower of rain, and in great numbers. As the fish will take nothing else, whilst the rise of this fly is on, it is necessary to use the imitation; but I do not consider it a very killing one, as fish seldom take the imitation well, when the fly itself is on, and hardly ever from recollection.

Hooks, Nos. 10, 11 and 12.

Body: Of Mole's fur, ribbed with dark yellow silk, slightly waxed.

Dark blue dun hackle.

Wing: A slip of Moorhen's wing feather.

This fly sometimes kills better dressed buzz.

Hooks, Nos. 12 and 13.

Body: Same as above.

And an opaque looking blue lead coloured hackle.

8. *The Stone Fly* comes out in April, and can be used until the end of May. It is a local fly, not found on all rivers, but on those where it is seen, often kills larger fish than any other fly. I have often with this fly circumvented some veteran trout, with whose place of

abode I had long been acquainted, but who steadily refused every other fly.

The female is much larger than the male, and is the one that should be imitated. The way to fish with this fly is on windy days, to use it on the cast *alone without any droppers*, the cast to be two yards long of medium strong gut, and fish all deep rapids, and behind large stones, stumps, and rocks, *sink it* as much as possible, and work it freely against the stream.

It should always be imitated buzz.

Hooks, Nos. 5 and 6, and occasionally No. 4.

Body : Hare's ear and yellowish pigswool mixed, the yellow predominating at the tail, and ribbed sparely, but evenly and distinctly with coarse yellow cotton thread.

Hackle : As transparent looking a grizzled dun hackle as can be procured, *with very long fibres*, three or four turns of this must be taken very tightly and close to the head. This hackle should be one-third longer than the hook.

I always make a head to this fly, with a few extra turns of the tying silk after finishing off and before varnishing.

9. *The Yellow Dun* comes out in April, and lasts through May. It is a first-rate fly, and kills on every

river ; it should be dressed both winged and buzz, and, when the fish are feeding on it, is advisable to have both on the cast.

Winged : Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10.

Body : Light yellow mohair, with a slight green tinge.

A lightish yellow dun hackle. Tail of same.

Wings : A glossy light greyish slip from hen starling's wing feather.

Dressed buzz.

Hooks : Nos. 10, 11 and 12.

Body : Same as above, dressed fat, and any opaque looking buff-coloured hackle wound on rather fully.

10. *The Hardy Brown* comes out on cold days in April and May, and again in September, and is useful on such days, as, owing to the lowness of the temperature, few other flies appear.

Hook, No. 10.

Body : Dark claret coloured silk. A red hackle.

Tail : Three long strands of same.

Wing : A dark slip of woodcock's feather. .

11. *The Brown Spinner* is the spinner from the yellow dun, it comes out in the evenings of April and May, and is sometimes useful in the afternoons.

Hook, No. 10.

Body: A dirty claret coloured silk. Dyed gut also makes a good body.

A dull reddish brown hackle.

Tail: Three long strands of same.

Wings: Light glossy slip of hen starling's feather.

12. *The Wrentail* is the imitation of a small land-bred fly, that comes out in great numbers by the sides of some rivers in April. On windy days trout take this fly very well.

Hooks, Nos. 11 and 12.

Body: Hare's face, ribbed with yellow silk.

Hackle: A wren's tail rather *sparely* wound on.

There is a fly very similar to the wrentail, but rather larger, comes out the latter end of July, it is commonly called the frog-hop, but I have never done any good with it.

13. *The Oak Fly, or Downlooker.* A land-bred fly, out on warm days in May and June. It is quite a local fly, and where found is only useful in parts of the water overhung with trees. This fly will always kill on ponds containing trout in the May fly season. In Walton's time it seems to have been the most favourite fly with fishermen, and some of the dressings given for it are curious. It is also described as being out in March and

April, as well as May and June. I do not think this is the case, but at any rate the imitation is no use before May. It certainly does occasionally kill well on warm, windy days, and in the localities above mentioned, but it is an uncertain fly, the fish either take it well, or not at all. I seldom use it.

It can be dressed either winged or buzz.

The appearance of the natural fly is not quite the same on all waters.

For ponds it should always be dressed winged.

Winged: Hook, Nos. 8 and 9.

Body: Reddish orange worsted, with a good many turns of light brown silk for ribbing.

Hackle: Orange and black (coch-y-bondhu) hackle, rather long in fibre.

Wings: A mottled slip of ruddy brown hen's feather.

Dressed buzz: Hooks, Nos. 7 and 8.

Body: Dark brown and orange coloured mohairs mixed, and tied rather thicker at the head than the tail.

Hackle: Long and rather thick of a woodcock's feather.

14. *The Orl, or Alder*, is a most useful fly; the original is to be seen on most waters, and the imitation will kill all over the world. It comes out about the middle of May, occasionally a week earlier, and lasts a little more than a month.

It is a good fly all day long, although the original is out chiefly in the middle of the day. Except for lake fishing, it should always be imitated buzz.

Hooks, according to water, Nos. 8 and 9 are useful sizes. When the May fly is on, it may be tied on Nos. 6 and 7.

Body: 1st. Rich claret coloured worsted, over which dark bronze peacock's herl.

The worsted and herl showing alternately.

The body should be made fat, and a *light, smoky, transparent looking* grizzled dun hackle tied on rather fully.

This is by far the best imitation of the fly itself I have ever seen.

There are all sizes of this fly come out, so it may be tied on hooks from No. 5 to 11.

An Ork Fly for Lakes. Hooks, Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Body: Same as above, with a silver wire ribbing.

Hackle: Coch-y-bondhu.

Wings: Two very dark mottled slips of pheasant's wings.

15. *The Grey Spinner.* Can be used from April until the end of June in the afternoons and evenings. I consider this a most killing fly; it is the imitation of one of the spinners, but it is not necessary for the original itself to be on the water, when it is used. The fish will take it

from recollection ; it kills on most lakes, and I have used it with success on waters where I never saw the spinner itself. I fancy it bears a certain resemblance to a good many small flies.

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10.

Body : Olive brown worsted, ribbed distinctly with thin, gold wire.

A yellowish red hackle.

Tail : Four long strands of same.

Wing : Woodcock's wing feather.

16. *The Sand Fly* comes out early in April, and lasts until June. It is very killing on some rivers. It is a good fly in Derbyshire. I have also done well with it in Wales.

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10.

Body : Sandy fur, tied roughly.

A ginger-coloured hen's hackle.

Wings : A reddish slip of landrail's feathers.

17. *The Hawthorn*. A land-fly out in May and June on warm days. This fly will sometimes kill on small brooks, wherefore I give the dressing, for it is no use whatever on any tolerable sized river.

Hook, No. 8.

Body : Black ostrich herl tied full.

A very long fibred black hackle wound on rather sparsely.

Wings : A darkish grey slip of starling's feathers.

18. *Black Gnat* comes out on hot days in May, and lasts until August; this insect is well called the fisherman's curse, for when the fish are gnatting in all directions, they will seldom take either this or any other artificial fly. The best plan is to fish with this fly *by itself*, as stretcher fly, and without any drop flies whatever, on a cast two-and-a-half yards long of the very finest possible gut, and very well soaked and stretched so as to be without any kinks. On seeing a fish rise, throw exactly *on to the rise*, not above, let the fly sink for a few seconds, and then raise, and throw again.

Hooks, Nos. 13 and 14.

Body : Black ostrich herl, tied in at the tail, with three or four turns of dark grey silk.

A black hackle wound sparsely on.

Wing : A shiny grey slip of hen starling's feather.

19. *The Yellow Sally* comes out in May, and lasts until the end of August; it is partial to hot bright days. The exact imitation of it is.

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10.

Body : Light lemon-coloured crewel and a long fibred pale yellow hackle.

But this fly does not seem to kill at all in England, although I have sometimes killed fairly with it abroad.

There is however a good fly used in some places and called *The Dotterel*, which I fancy is meant for an imitation (although it cannot be considered a good one,) of the yellow sally; it will kill from May until September.

Hooks, Nos. 10, 11, and 12.

Body: Bright lemon-coloured floss silk wound on thicker at the head than tail.

Hackle: From a dotterel, it is an improvement to touch the tail end slightly with shellac varnish; this fly will kill all day long.

I never used this fly before last season, and can only account for its decided killing powers, by supposing it is a good imitation of some fly (not the yellow sally,) with which I am unacquainted. It is not the yellow dun, as that fly is not on the water after May, nor would this imitate it.

20. *The Orange Palmer* is made in imitation of a land fly, of a bright orange colour, somewhat resembling the fern fly, which may be seen on hot days in May, June, and July, in the grass, by the sides of most rivers. The imitation will kill on all rivers and brooks, and is a capital lake fly. White trout also take it greedily in

autumn. This fly is an exception to all other land-bred flies, in that it will kill on calm hot days as well as when there is a wind. It is also good in all conditions of water.

It may be tied on any size hook from No. 6 to 12.

Nos. 9 and 10 are good ordinary sizes.

Body: Bright orange worsted, wrapped on very tightly and ribbed with gold wire for the smaller sizes, and with gold tinsel for the larger.

Yellow and black, or yellow and red (coch-y-bondhu,) hackle, wound on rather fully and short in fibre.

21. *The Red Spinner* is the change from the blue dun, there is no use employing this fly before the end of May, when, if the weather is warm, it may be seen in the evenings, flitting up and down, just above the surface of the water, in great numbers. It is not a favourite fly with me, for although on rare occasions the fish take it well, its killing is very uncertain. It should always be used as a drop fly.

Hook, No. 10.

Body: Reddish brown crewel, tightly wrapped on and ribbed distinctly with gold wire.

A light red hackle.

Wings: The most transparent looking light, glossy, smoky, grey feather that can be obtained.

22. *The Coch-y-bondhu* is an imitation of a little beetle out in great numbers in June. Some years they are much more plentiful than others; the imitation may, however, be used at times all through the season. I believe, when fly fishing was in its infancy, that this insect was the fisherman's sheet-anchor. It is still a great favourite, especially in Wales, many professional fishermen always having it on their cast—and, as they would say, it is bound to kill whenever the fish are feeding on anything of the beetle species. But, generally speaking, I consider its killing powers overrated, and only use it at the time that the actual insect is on the water in June, and now and then when the May fly is on the water, when it is a very good fly, tied large, on a No. 7 hook.

Hooks, Nos. 10, 11, 12 and 13.

Body: Bronze peacock's herl, tied very fat, either with or without gold wire, or with a tip only of gold tinsel.

Hackle: Dark red with a black streak.

(Coch-y-bondhu.)

A few years ago there were unusually large flights of lady-birds out, and I then killed both trout and grayling very well with a small *Coch-y-bondhu*, which is as good an imitation of that little insect as you can have.

23. *The Female Yellow Dun* is a good evening fly in June and July, where it appears, but it is a local fly. It kills well in Herefordshire. I do not pretend to say whether this really is the female of the yellow dun ; but as it comes out at a different season, and there are numbers of rivers that throw up the yellow dun on which it is never seen, the probability is that it is a distinct fly.

Hook, No. 8.

Body : Light buff-coloured mohair. A very light, almost white, dun hackle.

Tail : Four very long strands of same.

Wings : Any very light shiny feather, with a very pale blue tinge.

The wing should be longer than on most flies.

24. *The Fern Fly* is an imitation of a reddish, orange-coloured beetle, which comes out in June, and lasts until the end of July. It should be used on *warm*, windy days, and only where there are trees overhanging the water, and always as stretcher fly. It is a fly that only kills occasionally, on some waters not at all. It is generally a good fly for brooks, and also on some rivers in France and Germany.

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10.

Body : Wrap nearly three quarters of the hook very

tightly with orange floss silk, then finish with three or four turns of bronze peacock's herl, made very fat.

A light yellowish red hackle.

Wings : A very brown mottled slip of hen pheasant's wing feather.

There is a fly which I have used for years for lake fishing, I do not remember how I first became possessed of the pattern, but I have always supposed that it was originally tied as an imitation of some fern flies. It is an excellent fly for all small mountain lochs ; I have also killed well with it on Welsh lakes.

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10.

Body : Light orange floss silk, tightly wrapped on.

A glossy black hackle, long and fine in fibre.

Wing : A rather long slip of moorhen's wing feather.

25. *The Caddis Fly*. A capital late evening fly, on the rivers it frequents, it is very thick on the Herefordshire rivers, I have also seen it out strong on the Derwent in Derbyshire, on all rivers throwing up very few fly, it is always worth a trial just before dusk. The fly comes out some time in June, and lasts about a fortnight. It is rather like a moth in its appearance.

Hooks, Nos. 8 and 9.

Body: Of buff creamy-coloured fur, or crewel, fur is the best, if of the right colour.

A very light delicate red hackle, long in fibre, two turns of this should be taken close to the head.

Wings: A full slip of any buff, creamy-coloured feather.

Tail: Two *thick* strands of same feather as the wing.

26. *The Blue Bottle* is sometimes a good fly to try in the evenings of July and August. It should always be used as a stretcher fly, and in clear water only. Fish with it *close under* the bank, it will not kill in the streams.

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10.

Body: Dark blue floss silk, ribbed evenly and distinctly with a fibre of black ostrich herl.

A black hackle put on sparely and long in the fibre.

Wing: A slip of any dark grey feather.

27. *The large Red Spinner* is the spinner of the March brown, and is sometimes a good fly late in the evening, more especially on very large rivers. It is a good white trout fly.

Hooks, Nos. 5 and 6.

Body: Crimson worsted tightly wrapped on, and ribbed distinctly with gold tinsel; but the best body is made of philozel of a dark crimson colour.

A bright red cock's hackle.

Tail: Four long strands of same.

Wing:—Same feather as the red spinner, put on rather long.

28. *The Sky Blue.* This little fly comes out on warm evenings in July and August, and is taken very greedily both by trout and grayling; it should always be dressed winged, not buzz, and used as a leading fly.

Hooks, Nos. 11 and 12.

Body: Of the most delicate tinged pale blue fur, ribbed with fine pale blue silk, and two turns of any pale buff hackle.

Tail: Two long strands of same.

Wings: A small slip of any very delicate light glossy feather, with a blue tinge.

29. *The Brown Owl.* This is a very good evening fly, and comes out, more or less, on most rivers, or some fly very much resembling it, and the imitation below given will kill fish all over the world. I have often surprised local fishermen by killing with this fly on rivers where they held it as an assured fact that nothing but the *very smallest flies* would kill.

The fly itself (a species of moth in appearance) comes

out after hot days in June and July. It should always be used to lead.

Hooks, Nos. 8 and 9.

Body : Yellowish brown pigswool, tied very fat and rough.

A sandy coloured hackle, rather fully wound on.

Wings : A full slip of brown owl's wing feather.

30. *The Red Ant.* On windy days in July and August large swarms of these insects may be seen flying or blown on to the water ; they generally come out for short periods at a time. I believe that they may be seen, more or less, on all rivers, and the imitation will kill grayling everywhere. Trout will also take it, but not quite so well.

The imitation kills best, where the river is covered with the natural insect.

The fly should be tied two sizes, hooks Nos. 10 and 12.

For the body : From the tail take two or three turns of bronze peacock's herl made fat, and finish the rest of the body with orange floss silk wrapped on very tightly.

A light red hackle.

Wing : a light slip of hen starling's feather.

The black ant is a fly I never use, the red one always killing better, even when the former is on the water.

31. *The White Moth.* I give this, and also the brown moth, as a list of flies would perhaps seem incomplete if without them, but as they only kill after dark, I never use them, and wish no one else did.

Hooks, Nos. 5, 6 and 7.

Body : White worsted tied very fat, and increasing in thickness from the tail to the head, and the tail end touched with shellac varnish to give a brown patch.

Any very long fibred white hackle.

Wing : A full long slip of any white feather.

There is a small white moth that will kill sometimes late in the evening, just before dusk.

Hook, No. 9.

Body : Of white worsted or better philozel, over this, at the tail end, take three or four turns of black floss silk.

A fine long fibred black hackle as long as the hook.

Wings : A short full slip of any white feather.

32. *The Brown Moth.* Hooks, Nos. 6 and 7.

Body : Gingery-brown pigswool, tied in the same fashion as for white moth, but without varnish.

A long fibred yellowish red hackle.

Wings : Slip of any very light buff feather.

33. *The Claret Spinner.* This is a very good late

evening fly, and will kill on any water ; it should be used in the dusk of July and August evenings.

Hooks, Nos 9 and 10.

Body : Crimson worsted, or still better rich crimson philozel, wrapped on very neatly and tightly, and distinctly ribbed with gold wire.

Any transparent looking hackle *dyed* crimson.

Tail : Four long strands of same.

Wings : A slip of any light grey, smoky looking feather.

It is impossible to imitate this spinner without the dyed hackle, but with this solitary exception, *dyed feathers should never be used* in dressing brown trout or grayling flies.

34. *The Silver Dun* is a small fly which comes out in August and September. It is one of the very best grayling flies ; trout will also take it, but I should not use it for the latter, except in water containing both fish.

It should be used as a drop fly.

1st Dressing. Hooks, Nos. 11 and 12.

Body of light grey crewel, ribbed with silver wire, and any light blueish grey hackle wound on very evenly and close to the head ; two turns of this is sufficient.

2nd Dressing. Hook, No. 10. Exactly the same as

above, only the body ribbed distinctly with silver tinsel instead of wire.

3rd Dressing. Hooks Nos. 11, 12, 13 and 14. Make the body entirely of silver tinsel, and a transparent looking grizzled grey hackle.

The first dressing should be used in low clear water, the second when it is higher, and the third may at any time be tried as a general fly for grayling.

35. *The Mulberry Dun.* This is also a capital grayling fly in August, and tied large will kill trout in April. It is the imitation of a small mulberry-coloured fly that comes out on nearly all rivers, but I have only, on very few occasions, found it known to local fishermen, and considering how greedily the fish take it, this seems to me a great oversight on their parts. It should be used as dropper. *For grayling in August.*

Hooks, Nos. 12 and 13.

Body: Mulberry-coloured mohair, and any light grey opaque looking hackle.

For Trout in April. Hook, No. 11.

Body as above, tied very fat, and a rather darker hackle tied bushily.

36. *Black Palmer.* This is not intended for the palmer used sometimes instead of the red palmer, but is

an imitation of a little black fly that may be seen on very hot days on nearly all rivers in August, dancing up and down very close to the surface, and always keeping close to the banks. It is never seen in the centre of the stream. It is a good fly for both trout and grayling. It should only be used in quite clear water. It kills on all French streams, and is the best fly you can use in August in the streams near Homburg.

Hooks, Nos. 11 and 12, and very occasionally No. 10.

Body: Black ostrich herl tightly wrapped on and ribbed distinctly with silver wire. When tied on No. 10 hook, with silver tinsel. A fine black hackle wound on close to the head.

37. *The August Dun.* A first-rate fly for both trout and grayling, and will kill from the last week in July to the end of October. It much resembles the March brown, but is smaller, and not so decidedly mottled. In medium sized, and small rivers, this is one of the best flies that comes out during the season, but I have always been surprised to find that it does not kill well on *large rivers*. On these last I have often killed well with the March brown when the fish would not look at the imitation of the August dun, although its original was thick on the water. I am quite unable to give any reason for this,

but have proved the fact on a great many different waters.

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10 ; occasionally, No. 11. Body : Hare's face put on very thinly and sparsely, and thickly ribbed with dull, dark claret silk.

A grizzled black and sandy (coch-y-bondhu) hackle.

Wings : A dark mottled slip of brown hen's feather.

38. *The September Dun.* I have found this fly more or less on every river I have ever fished ; it comes out the end of August or beginning of September, and remains on the water about a month. It is an evening fly, but after it has been out and on the water for some days, may be used in the afternoons as well as late. Both trout and grayling take it most greedily, and when they are feeding on it, it is advisable to have both winged and buzz imitations of it on your cast.

Winged : Hooks, No. 11 and 12.

Body : Creamy buff worsted, wrapped tightly on and ribbed with fine silk of the same colour ; the worsted ought then to be picked out with a needle so as to look rather hairy between the silk ribbings.

A light buff-coloured hackle.

Tail : Three very long strands of same.

Wings: A fine slip of any very light glossy buff feather.

Dressed Buzz: Hooks, Nos. 12, 13, and 14.

Body same as winged, but without any ribbing.

A fine buff-coloured hackle sparsely put on.

The fly itself much resembles the caddis on a small scale.

39. *The Green Insect.* This little insect or midge comes out in September. At that time you may see quantities of them on all the trees by the river side, little shiny green creatures. Fish pick them off the floating leaves. I have seen them at all seasons, but September is the month to use the imitation. A drizzly rainy day is the best. This is one of the most killing of all, grayling flies; trout will also take it very well.

Hooks from No. 11 to the smallest size.

When grayling are feeding on this fly, I always use one tied on No. 11 hook as stretcher, and another on No. 14 hook as one of the droppers.

Body: The brightest green peacock's herl tied fat.

A very light smoky grey hackle wound on very neatly and close to the head.

40. *The Blue Gnat.* This little insect comes out in August, but September is soon enough for the imitation.

It lasts until the end of October. It is chiefly out in the middle of the day. Grayling *occasionally* take it very well.

Hook, No. 12.

Body of the *lightest part* of a mouse's fur.

Any light blueish grey hackle.

41. *The Mid Blue*. This fly, which somewhat resembles the blue dun; comes out about the middle of September and lasts until the end of November. It is partial to cold days. The rise generally lasts for half-an-hour or so, in the same way as that of the iron blue. It is a very good fly for both trout and grayling, and will kill all day long, supposing the fish to have *tasted the original*.

Hooks, No. 10 and 11.

For the body take a piece of stout gut, and having flattened it between the teeth, soak it in the gut-dying mixture, described in the chapter on tackle, until it becomes of a dirty olive green tinge, wrap this very neatly and tightly round the hook, this gives the only good imitation of the fly I know.

A blue dun hackle.

Tail: Two strands of same.

Wings: A slip of any blueish grey feather of a medium shade, set on very upright.

42. *The Cinnamon* somewhat resembles the sand fly, it comes out about the end of August and lasts until sometime in October.

I have seldom done much execution with this fly on rivers, but have sometimes, when tied large, killed well with it on lakes.

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10, or for lakes, Nos. 6 and 7.

Body of cinnamon-coloured mohair.

A reddish yellow hackle.

Wing: A reddish slip of landrail's feather.

For lakes the body should be slightly ribbed with lemon coloured silk.

43. *The Whirling Dun* is one of the most killing of grayling flies, and will also kill trout. It comes out at uncertain times in September and lasts until the end of October; it is best used on warm windy days, the more boisterous the day the better.

Hook, No. 10.

Body: Light foxy red fur, imperceptibly ribbed with fine silk of the same colour.

A ginger coloured hackle.

Tail: Four long strands of same.

Wing: A slip of hen starling's feather, of a medium grey shade.

There are very many dressings made up for this fly, but this is the only one I have ever seen that is a good imitation of the original.

44. *The Willow Flies.* I believe that these flies are on every river in the world, more or less, during the whole year. I do not know whether an entomologist would dispute this, I only write as a fisherman, but I have seen some of them at all seasons on waters in various parts. When this fly's wings are closed it presents the appearance of a little piece of stick. The female is larger than the male, and is a good fly to use on cold days in September and beginning of October. The male fly should be used also on cold days, from October until the end of December is the time when it is on the water in the greatest numbers, and during that time it is a great favourite with grayling; but I have never yet discovered the water whether river, lake, pond, or brook, on which this fly will not at times kill trout.

44. *The Female Willow.*

Hook, No. 10.

Body: Fur from a mouse, this should be tied in from the tail, half way up the hook, with a piece of flattened gut, dyed lightly in the mixture mentioned in chapter III. and very tightly wrapped on.

A grizzled hackle with a reddish tinge.

45. *The Male Willow.* Hooks from No. 10 to smallest possible size.

Body : Entirely of gut, dyed dark, and very tightly and evenly wound on.

A dark dun cock's hackle.

Gut is the only good imitation of this fly. Quills and silks are all failures.

There are of course quantities of other flies that come out, and which may all, at some time or other, be taken by the fish ; but the above given flies, with the addition of the general flies, are amply sufficient to fish all rivers or brooks for brown trout and grayling all over the world, in any season, and in all conditions of water. And when fish are *steadily feeding on a particular fly*, I believe it will always be discovered that they are taking one or other of the flies that I have described.

I will just give the names of three others, which I never use myself, but I have known good fishermen who were partial to them.

The Sedge Fly is quite a local fly. I have killed with it on the Test in Hampshire, but have never tried it anywhere else.

The Gad Fly or Horse Dun frequents meadows on hot

days in July and August. I fancy it does not often get on to the water, and therefore have never attempted imitating it; but knew one very good fisherman who spoke very highly of it as a trout fly.

The Jenny Spinner is the spinner of the iron blue. All the imitations I have ever seen of this little fly, which has a curiously transparent body, have been utter failures, and I do not think it would repay one for the trouble, even if you could make a tolerable imitation of it.

GENERAL FLIES.

These flies, together with all other general flies, are useful, only in as far as that they bear a resemblance to some kinds of water insects; or that *one* general fly, when the fish are not very fastidious, will pass muster for *a number* of different flies; they should chiefly be used when few fly are out.

46. *The Red Palmer*. Whatever this lure may stand for in the fish's estimation, there is no doubt that they will at times take it on *all waters*, even on rivers throwing up little or no insect life, where the duns, and spinners, &c., would never rise a fish. It is always worth trying in very heavy water, and I have often killed fish with it in water too thick for any other fly. It is one

of the best flies to use for coarse fish. Trout take it best early in the season, that is when dressed as below; I would as soon throw my hat into the water as most of the things made for red palmers.

Hook, according to water, from Nos. 6 to 11; No. 9 is a good general trout size.

Body: Rusty red pigswool tied fat and rough, ribbed with gold tinsel.

A long-fibred rusty red cock's hackle.

On small rivers, and to use in autumn, a good palmer for both trout and grayling is tied thus.

Hooks, Nos. 10 and 11.

Body: Brownish red mohair, ribbed distinctly with gold wire.

A brownish red cock's hackle.

The hackles for both the flies should be fully put on, and wound on at the shoulders, not from end to end.

47. *The Coachman* is an imitation of some of the numerous small moths that come out on summer evenings. It will kill as an evening fly from June to September. On the river Teme this fly will kill all the afternoon in August, and on that river is the best fly to use at that month.

It should always be used as a leading fly.

Hook, from No. 5 to No. 10.

Body : Bronze peacock's herl tied very fat; if tinsel is added it should always be *silver*, not gold as generally used.

A light red hackle.

Wings : A thick slip of any white feather.

48. *Hoffland's Fancy* is about the best combination of silks and feathers that could be for a general fly, it bears a very fair resemblance to a number of actual flies.

It can be used all day long, and will at times kill on every water. On Welsh rivers, when tied on a No. 9 hook, it kills well in the commencement of the season. It is a very good fly on most continental rivers, and one of the very best flies to use in the early morning before the regular flies have come out.

Hooks, Nos. 9, 10 and 11.

Body : Reddish claret silk.

A red cock's hackle.

Tail : Four strands of same.

Wing : A blurred slip of hen pheasant's wing feather.

49. *The Governor* was I suppose originally dressed in imitation of some beetle. I believe this fly is a great favourite on some rivers, I have never found it any

use on small streams, but have killed well with it on the Herefordshire Wye, the Severn, and other large rivers.

Hooks, Nos. 6, 7 and 8.

Tip : Of dark orange floss silk.

Body : Bronze peacock's herl tied fat.

A red cock's hackle, very long in the fibre.

Wings : A dark slip of pheasant's wing.

I generally make a head to this fly with a couple of turns of peacock's herl.

I have killed both grilse and white trout with this fly tied on a No. 3 hook, ribbing the body with silver wire, and adding an extra tip of silver tinsel.

50. *The Red Tag* is a very good grayling fly in autumn.

Hooks, Nos. 10, 11 and 12.

Body : Of peacock's herl, one strand of bronze, and one strand of green wrapped on together.

Tag : Of red worsted, put on like a short thick tail.

And three turns of a bright red cock's hackle neatly wound on at the shoulder.

51. *The Bumble*. This is a Derbyshire grayling fly, used in that part of the country nearly all the season ; there is no doubt that at times it kills grayling very well, I have no belief in it as a trout fly.

It is, I suppose, meant for some water insect, but the local fishermen have spring, summer, and autumn bumbles, all dressed differently; and as they cannot point out the insect imitated, it is impossible to conceive *on what basis* they regulate their choice of colours, &c., for the different seasons.

Hooks, Nos. 10, 11 and 12.

Body: Crimson floss silk, ribbed with a fibre of peacock's herl.

A light, almost white hackle, wound on from end to end.

I have taken this dressing from a specimen in my book, tied by a Derbyshire fly-tyer; but you may use claret, or orange, or salmon coloured, or light green floss silks for the body, and also add tinsels.

52. *The Soldier Palmer* is sometimes useful when there is a stain in the water.

Hooks, Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11.

Body: Bright red worsted, tightly ribbed with gold wire.

A bright red cock's hackle, wound on from end to end.

53. *The Furnace Fly*. This fly is chiefly used in Derbyshire. It is a good grayling fly, and will in that county kill trout also.

It can be used from May until the end of October.

Hooks, Nos. 10, 11 and 12.

Body : Either of orange or crimson floss silk, ribbed with a fibre of bronze peacock's herl.

A black and red (coch-y-bondhu) hackle wound on from tail to head.

54. *The Badger Fly* is a good grayling fly in October.

Hooks, Nos. 12, 13 and 14.

Body : Either of green or bronze peacock's herl tied very fat, like a small ball.

A white and black grizzled hen's hackle, rather short in fibre, and fully wound on.

55. *General Fly, No. 1.*

Hooks, Nos. 10, 11 and 12.

Body : Light salmon colored floss silk, and a very clear light hackle with a buff tinge sparsely put on and long in fibre.

This will kill trout from June to August on any river. It should only be used late in the evening, and in quite clear water.

56. *General Fly No. 2.*

Hooks, No. 9 and 10.

Body : Lemon colored silk, ribbed with silver wire.

A black and white speckled hen's hackle.

This fly should be used on warm still days. It is often a good evening fly, but it will not kill on some rivers as well as others.

Tie a slip of grey speckled feather over this fly as a wing, and you have a good lake fly.

57. *General Fly, No. 3.*

Hooks, Nos. 9 and 10, sometimes No. 8 for white trout.

Tip: Two or three turns of either gold or silver tinsel.

For the body: 1st, wrap about three quarters of the hook very tightly with dull silk of any of the following colours:—Claret, brown, reddish brown, orange, or olive. 2nd, finish off the body towards the shoulder with some turns of bronze peacock's herl, made fat.

For the hackle: any speckled black and white, or grizzled, or brownish red, or black feathers, long in fibres and wound on very neatly close to the head. The hackles ought to be rather longer than the hook, and of course the body silk and hackle ought to somewhat *assimilate* as to color.

For the appearance of this fly when tied, see a cut in the chapter on tackle.

Flies, something like these, are very much used in Scotland, and the North of England. I always carry some of them in my book, as they may be tried at any

season, and in any conditions of water, when the fish are not feeding on a particular fly. They will pass muster very fairly for a good many flies, and perhaps also for some water spiders, if the fish ever have the chance of feeding on such insects, about which I am unable to hazard an opinion, never having seen one.

58. *General Fly, No. 4.*

Hooks, from No. 10 to 14.

Body : Dark olive green silk, ribbed with fine gold wire.

A grizzled red and black (coch-y-bondhu) hackle.

Wing : A slip of woodcock's wing feather.

I got the pattern of this fly in Carlisle, about seven years ago, and have used it ever since. I do not know whether it is meant as an imitation of any particular fly, but fancy it kills from the same reasons as the Hoffland's Fancy.

It should be used in June, July and August in clear water, and on the hottest days. It is a very good trout fly.

59. *General Fly, No. 5.* The following will kill coarse fish wherever they will take any fly, and I have killed large trout with it in large rivers.

Hooks, from No. 6 to No. 10.

Body : Of *clean* light washleather, a thin strip of this wound very evenly on, and distinctly ribbed with dark brown silk, two turns of a light red hackle, the fibres should be as long as the hook.

Wings: Two light red hackle, points set on upright, and when tied on No. 10 hook two wren's tails.

60. *General Fly, No. 6.*

Hooks, Nos. 10 and 11.

Body : Of light blue fur from a rabbit, ribbed with silver wire.

A partridge hackle put on bushily.

This fly, which somewhat resembles a small March brown, can be always tried if you do not know what fly to use. Only if you are fishing where there are any salmon pinks you will find it impossible to keep them off the hook, it seems to have such an attraction for them.

61. *General Fly, No. 7.*

Hooks, No. 4 to No. 9.

Body : Light olive mohair, ribbed with gold wire.

A brownish red hackle.

Tail : Three strands of partridge feather.

Wing : A long rather fine slip of partridge's feather.

This fly will kill on nearly all rivers in February and March, before the March brown comes out, and on large

rivers again the end of September and October. It is a very good fly for Wales.

MAYFLY FISHING.

THE MAYFLY, GREENDRAKE, OR CADDOW.

THIS fly comes out about the 25th of May and lasts, generally, about three weeks. The Mayfly season has a great attraction for numbers of anglers, and I know many men, who fish during it, that never wet a line during the rest of the year. I do not understand the reason for this, except that any novice can kill a few fish with it when they are taking it kindly, but as far as regards the imitation they seldom do this more than one season out of four or five.

I have always remarked that when the duration of fly on the water has been unusually extended so that you might see some of them out in the beginning of July, fish never seemed to feed greedily on them, even at the commencement of the rise.

The chief thing is to have *heavy water*, as fish will take *this fly* in higher and also more coloured water than they will any other, but at the season it comes out the probability is that the water is too low and too fine to fish so large a fly properly.

During the time that it is out trout are generally to be

found more under the banks and sides of streams than in the open water; after the fly is off they are again scattered.

There are all sorts of dressings made up for Mayflies, some of them called and intended to be used as floating Mayflies, this, like all attempts at fishing with a dry fly, I hold to be an utter delusion. I always use the imitation, dressed buzz, and fish with *a sunk fly*.

Of course, when using a natural fly, you must keep it on the surface of the water, but in this case it has life, and if sunk would be presented to the fish as a *dead wet fly*. Whilst, as I have remarked in another place, the sunk artificial fly has the appearance of a dry floating live fly, for although fish are very acute, yet I hardly fancy that from *an upward glance at it* they are able to judge whether the fly is exactly on the surface or sunk two or three inches below it. Of one thing I am certain, that the Mayfly, imitated buzz fashion, and fished as an ordinary fly, will always hold its own against any of the so-called floating imitations, and I have always found it beat them hollow on rivers; but for lakes or ponds I prefer a fly, dressed winged, but still to be sunk, although even on these waters I have done very well with the hackled imitation.

On lakes, when the fish rise well, the natural fly and the blowline are good sport, especially on some of the Irish lakes where the trout run large, but if I had my will they should never be allowed on any rivers, if I could, I would also put my veto on any natural fly fishing whatever in any water where the artificial can be used. Dabbling being only another name for poaching in my ideas.

When the Mayfly is on, the orl, coch-y-bondhu, and orange palmer flies are generally taken well by trout, and they should be tied large on Nos. 7 or 8 hooks. I always use one of these as a dropper when the drake is the stretcher fly.

The grey drake is easier imitated than the green, and sometimes kills well in the evenings.

It is never advisable to fish the Mayfly on your ordinary fly rod, for these heavy flies ruin it, and a double-handed rod does not answer, because you ought to throw the fly with the greatest accuracy under banks and among bushes, which it is impossible for any one to do with sufficient nicety with the double-handed rod. I always use a strong single-handed twelve foot rod made entirely of greenheart.

For my own part, if I was limited to a fortnight's or

three weeks' fishing during the year, I would infinitely prefer having it in April, when the March brown was well out, than in the drake season. But there is no doubt that the latter is a period of amusement to numbers, who only fish occasionally, but the constant fisherman would be the gainer if this fly never appeared. It utterly spoils all fly fishing on the waters it frequents for at least a fortnight after it has disappeared, and that at a good time of the year.

The Green Drake.

Hooks, according to water, No. 5 is a good size.

Body : Of sheepswool dyed a light yellowish buff colour, and ribbed distinctly with dark reddish brown silk.

At the tail end a small brown patch should be made by touching it with shellac varnish.

Tail : Four long strands of any brown feather.

The hackle should be wound on fully, and be about one-third longer than the hook, and you ought always to have flies tied of two shades, one light and the other darker.

The Light Fly.

A light speckled hen's hackle, dyed a light yellowish buff colour.

The Darker Shade.

The same hackle, dyed darker of a dirty olive colour.

The Grey Drake.

Hooks as for green drake.

Body: Of white floss silk, or better philozel, ribbed distinctly, first with dark brown silk, and then with silver tinsel.

Tail: Four very long strands of any brown feather, and a light speckled grey hen's hackle put on as for green drake.

A Winged Green Drake for Lakes and Ponds.

Hook, No. 6; occasionally Nos. 4, and 5.

Body and tail: Same as buzz dressing.

A long-fibred cream-coloured hackle.

Wings: Two equal sized slips from a mallard's wing feather stained of a dirty olive colour.

A Winged Grey Drake for Lakes, &c.

Hook, No. 6; occasionally No. 5.

Body and tail: Same as buzz dressing.

A grizzled grey hackle wound on from tail to head and clipped close, and two turns of partridge hackle over this at the shoulder.

Wings: Two equal sized full slips of guinea fowl's feather.

The Tails on all these flies ought to be made *quite limp*, this peculiarity is very marked in the natural fly. Rabbits whiskers answer the purpose very well.

A LIST OF FLIES FOR EACH MONTH.

Flies marked thus will kill on all Rivers.*

Month.	Name.	No.
February	*Blue Dun	1.
	February Red	2.
	*Red Palmer	46.
	General Fly, No. 7 ...	62.
March	Blue Dun	1.
	February Red	2.
	Red Palmer	46.
	General Fly, No. 7 ...	61.
	Cowdung	3.
	*March Brown	4.
	*Hoffland's Fancy ...	48.
	*General Fly, No. 6 ...	60.
April	March Brown	4.
	Cowdung	3.
	*Yellow Dun	9.
	Grandam	5.
	Spider Fly	6.

Month.	Name.	No.
April (continued)	Iron Blue	7.
	Stone Fly	8.
	Hardy Brown	10.
	Brown Spinner	11.
	Wrentail	12.
	Mulberry Dun (tied large)	35.
	*Grey Spinner	15.
	Sand Fly	16.
May	Stone Fly	8.
	Yellow Dun	9.
	Hardy Brown	10.
	Brown Spinner	11.
	Grey Spinner	15.
	Sand Fly	16.
	The Oak Fly	13.
	*The Orl or Alder	14.
	Hawthorn	17.
	*Black Gnat	18.
	Yellow Sally, Dotterel ...	19.
	*Orange Palmer	20.
	Red Spinner	21.
June	Green and Grey Drakes	
	The Orl	14.

Month.	Name.	No.
June (continued)	Oak Fly	13.
	Yellow Sally, Dotterel ...	19.
	Orange Palmer ...	20.
	Red Spinner	21.
	Grey Spinner	15.
	Hawthorn	17.
	Black Gnat	18.
	*Coch-y-bondhu ...	22.
	Female Yellow Dun ...	23.
	Fern Fly	24.
	Caddis Fly	25.
	*Brown Owl	29.
	*The Coachman ...	47.
	*General Fly, No. 1 ...	55.
	Ditto No. 2 ...	56.
	* Ditto No. 4 ...	58.
July	Black Gnat	18.
	Yellow Sally, Dotterel ...	19.
	Orange Palmer ...	20.
	Red Spinner	21.
	Female Yellow Dun ...	23.
	Fern Fly	24.
	Brown Owl	29.
	The Coachman ...	47.
	The Bluebottle ...	26.

Month.	Name.	No.
July (continued)	Large Red Spinner ...	27.
	Sky Blue ...	28.
	*Red Ant ...	30.
	White and Brown Moths	31 & 32.
	*Claret Spinner ...	33.
	Furnace Fly ...	53.
	General Fly, No. 1 ...	55.
	Ditto No. 2 ...	56.
	Ditto No. 4 ...	58.
August	Ditto No. 5 ...	59.
	The Yellow Sally, Dotterel	19.
	Red Spinner ...	21.
	Bluebottle ...	26.
	Large Red Spinner ...	27.
	Sky Blue ...	28.
	Red Ant ...	30.
	Claret Spinner ...	33.
	*Silver Dun ...	34.
	Black Palmer ...	36.
	*Mulberry Dun ...	35.
	August Dun ...	37.
	Furnace Fly ...	53.
	The Coachman ...	47.
	The Governor ...	49.
	General Flies, Nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5 ...	

Month.	Name.	No.
September	Silver Dun	34.
	August Dun	37.
	*The September Dun ...	38.
	Claret Spinner	33.
	March Brown	4.
	Iron Blue	7.
	Hardy Brown	10.
	Red Spinner	21.
	Large Red Spinner ...	27.
	*Green Insect	39.
	Blue Gnat	40.
	The Cinnamon	42.
	The Whirling Dun ...	43.
	Female Willow	44.
	Governor	49.
	The Bumble	51.
	Hoffland's Fancy ...	48.
	Badger Fly	54.
	Furnace Fly	53.
	General Flies, Nos. 3, 5, and 6.	
October	August Dun	37.
	Green Insects	39.
	March Brown	4.
	February Red	2.

Month.	Name.	No.
October (continued)	Male and Female Willows	44 and 45
	Mid Blue	41.
	Small Red Palmer ...	46.
	Whirling Dun	43.
	Cinnamon	42.
	Red Tag	50.
	The Red Palmer ...	46.
	The Bumble	51.
	Furnace Fly	53.
	General Flies Nos. 3 and 7	
November	Mid Blue	41.
	Blue Dun	1.
	Small Red Palmer ...	46.
	*Male Willow	45
	Red Tag	50.
	Badger Fly	54.
	Bumble	51.
	Furnace Fly	53.

All the rest of the winter for grayling, use a cast made up as follows :—

Blue Dun, Stretcher.

Willow, Hook, No. 10, 1st Drop.

A small Red Palmer, 2nd Drop.

Willow, Hook, No. 12, 3rd Drop.

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