

**ANGLER'S GUIDE TO
THE RIVERS & LOCHS
OF SCOTLAND**

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Angler's Guide to the Rivers & Lochs of Scotland by Robert Blakey

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RIVERS & LOCHS OF SCOTLAND.

BY

ROBERT BLAKEY,

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AUTHOR OF

“The Angler's Guide to the Rivers and Lakes of England and Wales.”
“Hints on Angling,” “The History of the Philosophy of Mind,” &c., &c.

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PREFATORY REMARKS.

ANGLING is, unquestionably, one of the most ancient arts or amusements of which we have any record. It is mentioned in the books of the Old Testament. It is engraved on Egyptian remains of three thousand years old; and, in the monuments from Nineveh, recently deposited in the British Museum, we have a representation, almost as large as life, of a man angling, with a rod and line, and with a fishing-creel on his shoulders, precisely similar in shape to those we use in Great Britain at the present day. The art is mentioned by Herodotus, one of the earliest Greek historians; and Theocritus, a Grecian angler, who flourished B.C. 270, treats of his favourite sport in a poem of considerable length. The Romans fished with net and hook, as we do at present; and a caricature of angling has been found among the remains of the City of Herculaneum.

From the Christian era to the discovery of printing, there were many works written on the piscatory art; most of them have, however, been lost, or are now mouldering in manuscript in the chief public libraries of France, Italy, Spain, Holland, and other northern countries of Europe. Since the establishment of printing to the present day, there have not been fewer than from five to six hundred works written on the art, in the several kingdoms of the European Continent; more than one-half of the number belonging to the English literature on the subject.

But our own nation has taken a decided lead, from the earliest times, in disseminating a knowledge of rod-fishing in every quarter of the globe. There is scarcely a section of its surface, on which a Briton has set his foot, where the art is not known. There are angling clubs or societies in every country of Europe. The art is practised in all our extensive Indian territories; throughout the colony of the Cape of Good Hope; in various portions of Australia; and in the Canadas. In all the United States of America,—particularly in those of New England,—rod-fishing is generally followed as an amusement, and has been eloquently written about, as is manifest from the treatises and occasional papers on the subject, which have issued from the pens of Washington Irving, Dr. Smith, Dr. Beecher, and the late Hon. Daniel Webster. We see from the American newspapers that angling societies are formed in districts that lie a thousand miles west of the city of New York. In fact, the Anglo-Saxon race are destined to make angling a common and rational recreation all over the world. In their diversified migrations, a fishing-rod is now

almost as necessary an appendage to their outfit as the rifle or the pistol.

As a proof of the vast increase in the number of anglers, both in this and other countries, we may refer to the fact, that forty years ago, there were not more than *six* or *seven* fishing-rod and tackle-makers and sellers in the metropolis; *now*, there are between *forty* and *fifty*; and no small portion of the business of these establishments, is the exportation of rods and tackle to almost every part of the civilized world.

In reference to the present small work, on the Rivers and Lochs of Scotland, now offered to the public, I have little to say; nor is there much required. I have told my own story, I hope in plain and simple language, and in my own fashion. I hold the opinion that angling should be lightly treated, and that nothing tends to depress the art, and make it a dull and lifeless thing to be written about, than the practice of compiling treatises upon it, like Parliamentary Blue Books, full of statistical and foreign matters, not in fair keeping with the end or object of rod-fishing. That end is chiefly to open out and stimulate the contemplative and reflective powers of the inward man; and to make him feel the delightful pleasures flowing from a free and direct intercourse with external nature. Unless this grand end be kept in view, and all our written dissertations upon it have a reference to it, angling is not worth a moment's consideration. The moral and thoughtful habits ought to be the primary objects we aim at forming and strengthening, in every mode of describing and recommending the art. Besides, minute matters of detail can be of no real service in the acquirement of the art. No man can be