

**THE PRACTICAL ANGLER, OR  
THE ART OF TROUT-FISHING,  
MORE PARTICULARLY  
APPLIED TO CLEAR WATER**

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The practical angler, or the art of trout-fishing, more particularly applied to clear water by W. C. Stewart

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**W. C. STEWART**

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THE  
PRACTICAL ANGLER

OR

*THE ART OF TROUT-FISHING*

MORE PARTICULARLY APPLIED TO CLEAR WATER

BY W. C. STEWART

EIGHTH EDITION

EDINBURGH  
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1883

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1883

## P R E F A C E.



—♦—

OST anglers meet with fair success when the waters are dark coloured ; but when the waters are clear they find poor sport. This is mainly due to an erroneous system of fishing, which angling works already published have done little to remove, and which, though its effects were not so observable fifty years ago, when drainage was less extensively in operation, and when the streams continued large and discoloured for some time, is not at all adapted for the small clear waters of the present day. It is with the view of showing how almost, if not quite, as good sport may be had in clear water as in coloured, that we have undertaken to add another to the numerous volumes already existing upon this very popular amusement. It is almost unnecessary to add, that as it is

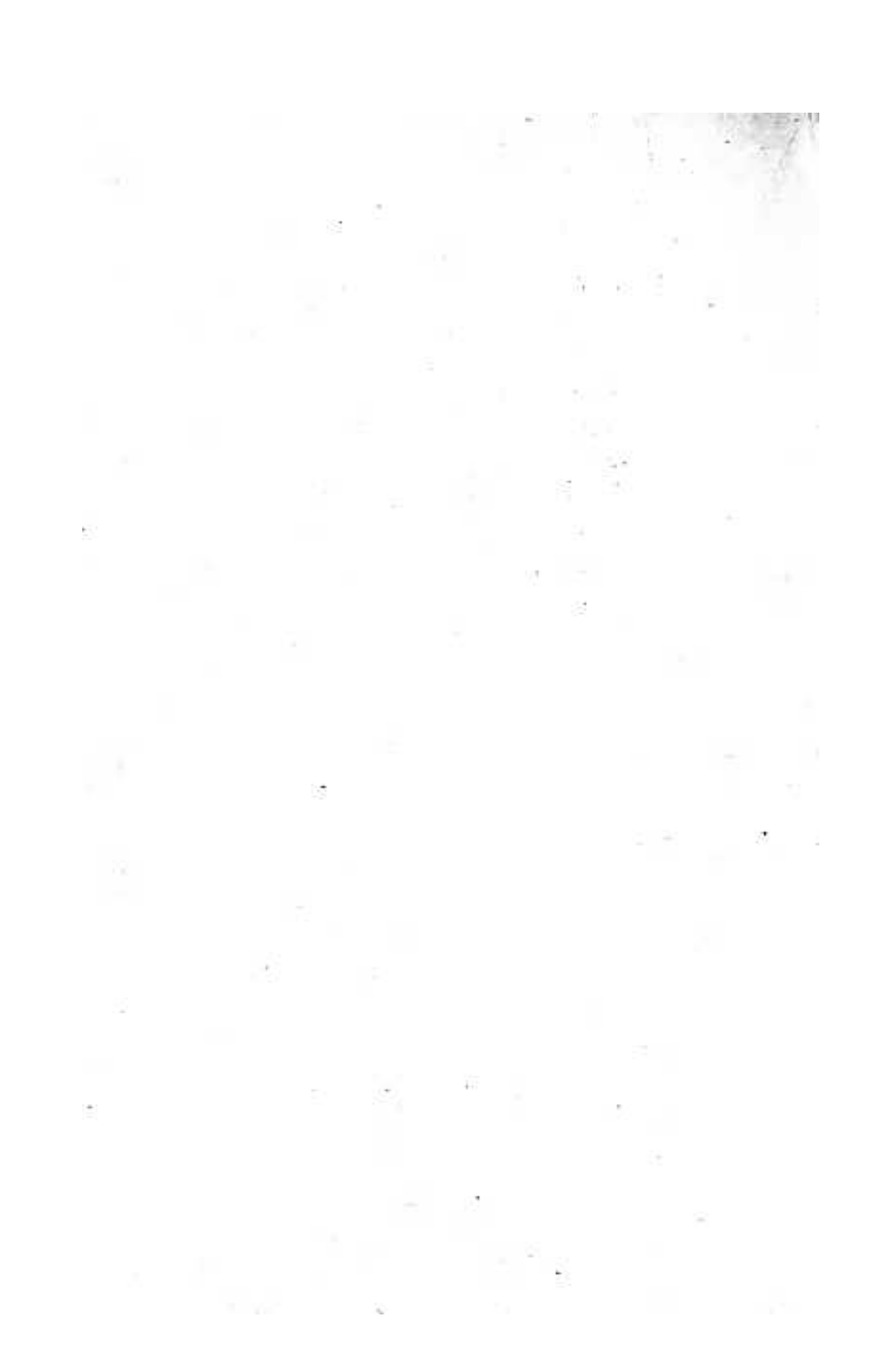
more difficult to deceive trout in clear water than in coloured, the method of angling which succeeds best in the one case will also succeed best in the other.

For more than fifteen years we have pursued angling with the greatest assiduity ; and during that period have obtained information from a number of excellent amateur anglers (among whom we may mention the Secretary of the late St. Ronan's Angling Club), to all of whom we take this opportunity of expressing our thanks. We have also fished with, and watched while fishing, almost all the best professional anglers of the day, including the celebrated James Baillie, considered by all who knew him the ablest fly-fisher in Scotland, and from whom we have received some valuable information upon that branch of the art ; and it must be admitted that there are few anglers like those whose ingenuity and perseverance are stimulated by necessity. The information received from these we have thoroughly tested before admitting it into the following pages, and we may safely say that we have gained more from half-an-hour's conversation with such, than from all the books we ever read upon the subject, and

their number is not small; most works upon angling being rather amusing than instructive. The angler will not find this the case in the following volume: if he finds nothing instructive, he will certainly find nothing amusing; and we found our claims to the attention of the angling community solely upon the ground of the information we have to convey, which we have endeavoured to make as distinct as possible; and as this treatise is only intended for anglers, we expect that the style and composition will not be very severely criticised.

EDINBURGH, *January 1857.*





## PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.



THE reception which the "Practical Angler" met with when first published, four years ago, was highly gratifying. The press, as our readers will see by the appendix to this volume, expressed a very favourable opinion; and since then it has gone through three editions—an amount of success which shows clearly that what the angling community now want, is not another amusing description of the pleasures of angling, but a book to teach them how to fish.

In other respects, also, the success of the "Practical Angler" has been quite up to our expectations, not that it has made a first-rate angler of every one who has read its pages; very far from this. It is one thing to be told how to fish, it is another and much more difficult thing to do it successfully; but the theory of angling therein explained has been generally

received as correct, and if the angler cannot put it in practice it is his own fault. Most of our readers, however, admit having derived some benefit from these pages, and we have received numerous letters from anglers residing in all parts of the kingdom mentioning this, and stating that their baskets now present a very different appearance on their return from a day's angling. It is, however, painful to be compelled to admit that there is a very large number of anglers who have never read this volume at all, giving as a reason that they know all that is in it already and can fish well enough. Now, if these were first-rate anglers, there would be some excuse for them; but they are by no means so; and it would be difficult to understand the state of their minds, but that *Blackwood's Magazine* has most opportunely solved the problem. The reviewer of this volume in that periodical says—"That darkness rather than light is the deliberate choice of the million. The best teaching in the world is thrown away upon stupidity and self-conceit, and that not only in ethics, but in such practical matters as angling."

There can be no doubt that the reviewer has here hit upon the two causes of all the ignorance that is in the world, and we, as may be