

ANECDOTES OF FISH AND FISHING

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Anecdotes of Fish and Fishing by Thomas Boosey

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THOMAS BOOSEY

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BY

THOMAS BOOSEY

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1887

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P R E F A C E.

A PREFACE has been so long the customary method of an author introducing himself to his readers, that it has become almost a breach of good manners to obtrude on the public notice without it. Cap in hand, then, his first prefatory remark is, that the Piscatory collection which follows, was commenced by him very many years ago, solely for his own amusement, and was so continued, until it became of such magnitude as to awaken a thought that these high-way and by-way gatherings might also prove not altogether unacceptable to the public in general, but more particularly to the *gentle brothers of the craft*. From boyhood to his present decline in the vale of years, the author has been a practical Angler, as well as a diligent collector of whatever fell in his way that was in any degree connected with his favourite amusement. And if he cannot boast of offering much that is original, he may at least claim something on the score of industry, in letting nothing escape unnoticed that came before him. The practice of Angling has been so often and so well described, that while he cannot altogether pass over his favourite pursuit, without some glancings at the best methods of fishing with rod and line; the most judicious choice of times and seasons; and the

most favourable selection of stations for the purpose, as they have presented themselves in his own practice; he, nevertheless, principally builds his hope of interesting the reader by his anecdotal and biographical notices.

In this age of improvement, even our sports are wont to be offered to us with a philosophic halo around them. *Walton*, long ago, made Angling a medium for inculcating the most fervent piety and the purest morality. Nor can the finny tribes themselves fail to excite in our minds surprise and admiration, whether we consider the singularities of their construction, the diversity of their forms, or their vast importance to man. On these interesting subjects the author has confined himself to a few cursory remarks in his introductory chapter, and to the small gleanings from the labours of *Cuvier* and *Roget*, which commence his piscatorial reminiscences. Fearful of wading beyond his depth, he has principally directed his attention to such anecdotes, and facts, as he trusts will prove acceptable to the public in general and to Anglers in particular.

The Editor gladly avails himself of this opportunity of returning his best thanks to Sir *Henry Ellis*, for the handsome manner in which he has allowed him the free use of his printed and manuscript catalogue of Books on Angling, which gives considerable interest to the volume.

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ANECDOTES OF FISH AND FISHING.

I HAVE inserted a few preliminary observations upon the structure, body, and senses of Fishes, culled from Cuvier, and Dr. Roget's admirable work, "Animal and Vegetable Physiology," etc., etc.

EDITOR.

The body of a fish is nearly of the same specific gravity as the water it inhabits. The effect of gravity is therefore almost wholly counterbalanced by the buoyant force of that fluid; for the weight of a mass of water, equal in bulk to the body itself, is the exact measure of this buoyant force. If this weight were precisely the same as that of the fish, the animal would be able to remain suspended in any part of the fluid without the necessity of employing any voluntary motion or exertion for that purpose; but as the body of a fish is generally a little heavier than the fluid medium, especially if it be fresh water, it is necessary for the animal to