

**THE FISHERIES CONSIDERED AS A
NATIONAL RESOURCE, WITH COMMENTS
UPON THE LAWS RELATING TO THEM:
BEING A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES ON
THE STATE OF THE IRISH FISHERIES
PUBLISHED AT DIFFERENT PERIODS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649400546

The fisheries considered as a national resource, with comments upon the laws relating to them: being a collection of articles on the state of the Irish fisheries published at different periods by Robert Worthington

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Cover @ 2017

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ROBERT WORTHINGTON

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BEING A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES
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PUBLISHED AT DIFFERENT PERIODS.

BY
ROBERT WORTHINGTON, ESQ.,
BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

With an Appendix.

[REVISED CAREFULLY FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS.]

DUBLIN:
EDWARD J. MILLIKEN, 15 COLLEGE-GREEN.
1856.

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PREFACE.

THE motive for submitting any political or literary undertaking to the public, is frequently asked and frequently given; mine is easily explained, and is a very simple one. Being employed in the preparation of a legislative measure acknowledged to be one of great practical difficulty, and having embodied in it—and in the familiar publications which accompanied it, the experience of the greater part of my life, I am unwilling to allow my contributions to the general stock of knowledge to be altogether estranged from me, or to lie entombed in the periodicals in which they were originally published.

The purpose I proposed to myself at the time these articles first appeared in print, was, to delineate a system for the administration of

the fisheries; and as far as my humble ability permitted—to *demonstrate* it: and as the system I detailed has been since, in some of its most essential features, transferred into the statute law of the land, by means of bye-laws; and as the remaining portion of it, may also, in like manner, be finally absorbed and carried into operation, it is a very natural wish on my part to assert and record the ownership.

Whatever other causes I may have of just dissatisfaction—the circumstances would warrant a much harsher phrase—I am by no means displeased with this manner of appropriating my thoughts and labours; nor is it any source of exultation to me, that some of the most important principles of the system here delineated, to which a persevering and steady resistance had been offered for many years, have been since quietly and unostentatiously adopted.

That the Salmon-fisheries of this kingdom were vitally injured some years back, by projects and theories then for the first time promulgated, is not anywhere denied: the injury

thence occasioned to property, public and private, can in some respects never be either remedied or repaired. The chief influence in the control and management of the fisheries, was, at the period in question, transferred to the promoter of those theories, and the result was not difficult to foresee:—the new speculative system was at once adopted and introduced into practice, and it now is, of little import, that these theories have been since universally condemned, and that the projector and promoter of them has ceased to have further influence or control over the fisheries. The injury was done: an erroneous system was ingrafted upon the permanent legislation of the country; and a retrograde movement now, has become all but impossible. Such have been the results as far as the fisheries are concerned: but the appeal to public opinion which has been lately raised in England with reference to a right administration of the public affairs in practical and scientific departments, renders it very unlikely that the Fish-