

**THE ANGLER'S DESIDERATUM,
CONTAINING THE BEST AND
FULLEST DIRECTIONS FOR DRESSING
THE ARTIFICIAL FLY: WITH SOME
NEW AND VALUABLE INVENTIONS**

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The angler's desideratum, containing the best and fullest directions for dressing the artificial fly:
with some new and valuable inventions by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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THE
ANGLER'S DESIDERATUM,

CONTAINING

THE BEST AND FULLEST DIRECTIONS FOR
DRESSING THE ARTIFICIAL FLY;

WITH

SOME NEW AND VALUABLE INVENTIONS

BY

THE AUTHOR,

FROM A PRACTICE OF NEARLY HALF A CENTURY.

Captain Clarke, R.M.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY M. ANDERSON, MOUND PLACE,
MDCCCXXXIX.

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TO

LADY GORDON CUMMING,

OF

ALTYRE, MORAYSHIRE,

THE FOLLOWING TREATISE ON FLY-FISHING,

AND THE ART OF DRESSING THE FLY,

BEING THE RESULT OF

NEARLY FIFTY YEARS' STUDY AND EXPERIENCE;

IS, BY PERMISSION,

MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED,

BY HER GRATEFUL AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

1st January 1839.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Author's motive in publishing this little Treatise is, primarily, to leave behind him a mark of regard and esteem for some excellent individuals, lovers of angling, ere he quit for ever the rapid streams, majestic rivers, and still lakes of his fatherland, with their bonny banks and braes. At the same time, he must confess he would never have presumed to have done so, had he not been prevailed upon by their repeated solicitations, from his diffidence in appearing before the public for the first time. He trusts therefore to their indulgence, in not criticising too severely his first attempt. That it will have many enemies from interested individuals, he is well aware, but the advantages accruing from its publication, will fully compensate him for disclosing minutely the art, from his practice of nearly half a century. Should his first Essay be favourably received, which he has reason to anticipate, he begs leave to intimate, that it is only the precursor of another, more copious, and of consequence more efficient work (it is also far advanced), from his having the assistance of the first anglers in the united kingdom; this being only his own practice, and no adventitious aid from

books, or otherwise. It will also be his study, that it shall occasionally be interspersed with anecdote and fun, not trite but original, to amuse the angler when in a recumbent position, waiting under a tree or hedge, for a cloud passing between him and the sun. He will now close this preamble by remarking, that it has been a matter of surprise to him, that although it is now nearly two hundred years since Isaac Walton published his *Complete Angler*, every one who has written on the subject, has been almost invariably his wily plagiarist, as may be seen by comparing the book of that truly excellent and worthy man, with the publications which have teemed from the press on angling since the above period; and it may be truly surmised, that most of them have been written in some obscure garret in London, by authors who were perfect novices in that innocent, sublime and meditative recreation. When every other art has been progressively improving, that of angling seems to have retrograded, which can be attributed only to one of the following causes, viz.,—that selfish jealousy which some expert anglers in a great degree possess, in not disclosing their art; or, perhaps, to that modest diffidence so characteristic in the generality of those who follow that silent and reflective recreation. The Author will now finish the Introduction, by assuring the reader, that if he pays the attention requisite to the brief instructions laid down, he cannot fail to be a complete angler.

THE
ANGLER'S DESIDERATUM.

1st.—THE ROD.

NEVER angle with a small rod, even in streamlets; you cannot drop the fly in with that precision and delicacy at a distance, a long one enables you to do. It ought never to be less than twelve or sixteen feet, not bending at the top, when held horizontally; but, on the contrary, standing out gracefully from the root to the tip, tremblingly alive to the slightest motion of the hand; vibrating and felt by it at every throw; it ought not to be supple in the middle, nor stiff at the root, as most of the rods are that are hollow for reserved tops. The best wood to make them of is hickory, that from some parts of the West Indies is supposed to have the greatest elasticity; but all of this wood, if properly made, are good. Lance-wood tops some prefer, but from experience I have found them not so serviceable as hickory, as they often break, apparently from the short grain of the