

**SPRIGS OF HEATHER; OR,
THE RAMBLES OF "MAY-
FLY" WITH OLD FRIENDS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649475421

Sprigs of Heather; Or, the Rambles Of "May-Fly" with Old Friends by John Anderson

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JOHN ANDERSON

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SPRIGS OF HEATHER;

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THE RAMBLES OF "MAY-FLY" WITH OLD FRIENDS.

BY

REV. JOHN ANDERSON, D.D.,

MINISTER OF KINNOULL,

AUTHOR OF "THE PLEASURES OF HOME," AND "A LEGEND OF GLENCOE,"
&c., &c.

"A poor thing, but mine own."

—*Shakespeare.*

EDINBURGH: JOHN MENZIES & CO.

PERTH: JOHN CHRISTIE.

1884.

270. e. 564.

DEDICATION.

THIS little volume I beg leave to dedicate to the Members of the "PERTH ROYAL GOLFING CLUB," of which I have the honour to be the Chaplain, and in which I have long enjoyed much pleasure among a set of genial men, who are keen sportsmen, and rare good fellows.

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PREFACE.



IT has been my endeavour to make this volume something more than a *mere tackleshop in type*, wherein Thornton and Phin are the "Genii loci," and the Muses of the natural world are rarely consulted. My sketches are descriptive, historical, autobiographical, piscatorial, and lyrical—and thus I have sought to drape the subject of Angling in a literary garb. How I have succeeded in my aim it remains with the reading public to determine. But one thing at least is certain—that, if I have failed to entertain others, I myself have received a varied entertainment at the bounteous banquet of nature, where the trees and the flowers, the clouds of the sky and the songsters of the grove, the lochs and the streams, have been the ministering spirits. As all my rambles have led me into the moorlands, my first title is associated with the "sprigs of heather" which there beautify the solitude—each *sketch* denoting a "*sprig*"—and, as I wrote for many years in the *Field*

under the *nom de plume* of "Mayfly," I am induced to retain that word in my second title. Many know me by that name "for better or worse."

Charmed with the forms of Nature, let me sing
What simple joys from simple sources spring.
Ope but the ear, what strains of music roll !
Ope but the eye, what visions bless the soul !
Look where you will, what matchless pictures shine,
Their colours borrowed from the hand divine—
Where the white lilies on the lakelet float,
Each flower, to fancy's eye, a fairy boat,
Where the shy trout, beneath the alders cool,
Lurks in the crystal caverns of the pool—
Or, in the gloaming, wandering through the grove,
We hear the cascade's song in glory far above.

No dearth of pleasure e'er can starve the mind,
Disposed to seek what well-tuned souls may find—
The bliss that blooms in every wayside flower,
Breathes in the breeze, and sparkles in the shower,
Floats in the cloud, and laughs in every beam,
Sings in the wood, and murmurs in the stream.
At every door the hand of God hath strown
"Manna," that rich and poor can call their own !