

**THE COMPLETE ANGLER;
OR, THE
CONTEMPLATIVE MAN'S
RECREATION, VOL. II**

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The Complete Angler; Or, The Contemplative Man's Recreation, Vol. II by Izaak Walton & Charles Cotton & James Russell Lowell

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IZAAK WALTON & CHARLES COTTON & JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

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RECREATION, VOL. II**



THE
COMPLETE ANGLER,
OR THE
CONTEMPLATIVE MAN'S RECREATION,
OF
IZAAK WALTON AND CHARLES COTTON.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

VOL. II.



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CHAP. XIII. — *Observations of the EEL, and other Fish that want scales, and how to fish for them.*

PISCATOR.

IT is agreed by most men, that the Eel is a most dainty fish: the Romans have esteemed her the Helena of their feasts, and some the queen of palate-pleasure. But most men differ about their breeding: some say they breed by generation as other fish do; and others, that they breed, as some worms do, of mud; as rats and mice, and many other living creatures, are bred in Egypt by the sun's heat when it shines upon the overflowing of the river Nilus; or out of the putrefaction of the earth, and divers other ways. Those that deny them to breed by generation as other fish do, ask, If any man ever saw an Eel to have a spawn or melt? And they are answered, that they may be as certain of their breeding as if they had seen them spawn: for they say, that they are certain that Eels have all parts fit for generation, like other fish, but so small as not to be easily dis-

cerned, by reason of their fatness, but that discerned they may be, and that the he and the she Eel may be distinguished by their fins. And Rondeletius says, he has seen Eels cling together like dew-worms.

And others say, that Eels, growing old, breed other Eels out of the corruption of their own age, which, Sir Francis Bacon says, exceeds not ten years. And others say, that as pearls are made of glutinous dew-drops, which are condensed by the sun's heat in those countries, so Eels are bred of a particular dew, falling in the months of May or June on the banks of some particular ponds or rivers, apted by nature for that end; which in a few days are by the sun's heat turned into Eels: and some of the ancients have called the Eels that are thus bred the offspring of Jove. I have seen in the beginning of July, in a river not far from Canterbury, some parts of it covered over with young Eels, about the thickness of a straw; and these Eels did lie on the top of that water, as thick as motes are said to be in the sun: and I have heard the like of other rivers, as namely in Severn, where they are called Yelvers; and in a pond or mere near unto Staffordshire, where, about a set time in summer, such small Eels abound so much, that many of the poorer sort of people, that inhabit