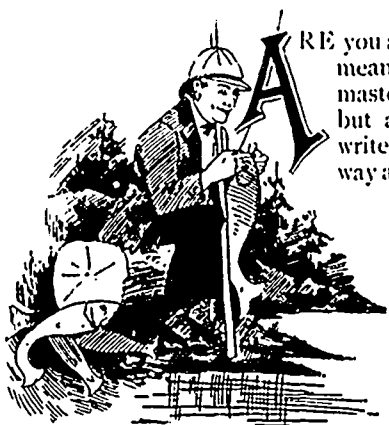


HOW TO MAKE A FLY-ROD.

BY SAMUEL M. BAYLIS.



feel the stirrings of emotion as you think of the delightful spots you have visited in your search for the scaled and spotted water-sprites; the happy hours spent in camp, canoe, or skiff; in imagination drinking again brimming draughts of Nature's tonic fresh from her fountains deep in the solemn woods? Do your fingers tingle with appreciation as you handle the plumed and gilded lures that hang light as thistle-down on the fairy films that bind them to the polished wand, bright as the lance of knight-errant of old, and does your heart respond to the silvery music the whirling reel sings in your delighted ear?

If you possess any of the spirit that animated the gentle Isaak Walton, and now breathes in a multitude of followers in his foot-steps ; if you know a good rod when you see and handle it, and believe, or will take my word for it, that one made by your own hands, that you have seen develop under your own eyes by your own work, is productive of many times more enjoyment than the very finest you can get, simply by doing as others do—*buying* it : if you have but an ordinary knowledge of tools and how to use them, and are possessed of the *stick-to-it-iveness* necessary to carry you through your self-imposed labour of love, then you are in the mood to listen to a few friendly hints from an *amateur* possibly no better qualified than you to do what he has done, and now proposes to his brother anglers to attempt.

The first essential requisite in a trout lunch is, of course, *trout*—the better the trout the better the lunch. The first thing required in making a rod is the *wood*—the better the wood the better the rod ; and for this it is advisable to apply to some reliable dealer in fishing stock for good, selected, *seasoned* material, even if you have to pay a little more for the choice. As to the kind of wood, the many varieties of fancy woods suitable for the purpose may be narrowed down to two—*Lancewood* and *Greenhart*. In the opinion of experts, both hold high, of not equal rank, my own taste leading me to choose *Greenhart* on account of the handsome graining and rich warm colour when polished. The prime essential, however, is, that the pieces selected should, when worked down to the proper size for the joints, stand a severe test of bending by resting one end on the ground and pushing down the other to form a bow, holding in this position for some seconds, and then suddenly releasing the tension. If the recoil is swift and steel-like, and no departure from the straight is apparent, your wood is first-class, provided, of course, it is also free from knots and sudden cross grains.

We will suppose that it is desired to make a rod of

the ideal standard .8 to 1.0 oz. in weight, and 10½ to 11 ft. long. Excessive lightness on the one hand is as undesirable as too great length on the other—"backbone" and elasticity within reasonable limits are the essentials to be aimed at—hence the judgement of most anglers would fix the standard at about the figures named, though rods weighing only 4½ oz. and 9 ft. in length are in use and highly praised by their admirers.

It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that in rod-making, as in fishing tackle of all kinds, your materials should be of *the best*, and any striving for *cheapness* avoided as you would the plague—better *buy* a rod for two or three dollars and have done with it.

The materials required to make a rod of the standard named above, which may be procured of any reputable dealer at a cost of about four dollars, are as follows :-

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|--|---|--|
| 1 | piece of greenhart, | 1½ in. square and 3 ft. 9 in. long for butt. |
| 1 | “ “ | “ “ “ “ “ “ middle. |
| 2 | “ “ | “ “ “ “ “ “ tips. |
| 1 | nickel-plated, | ¾ “ Reel-Seat (below hand). |
| 1 | “ | 1½ “ mated ferrule, <i>without</i> |
| | | <i>dowel</i> (capped, wel- |
| | | ted and water-proof,) } for butt. |
| 1 | “ | 1½ “ “ “ “ “ middle. |
| 1 | “ | ¾ “ “ “ “ “ “ “ entering ferrule, for extra tip. |
| ½ doz. No. 3, 1 doz. No. 2, 2 doz. No. 1 | Rings and Keepers, | (more than required, but useful for repairs). |
| 2 | nickel-plated single ring | tops. |
| 1 | “ | 1½ in. winding check. |
| 2 | “ | solid metal stoppers for ferrules. |
| 1 | pot Best liquid glue, or Russian Cement. | |
| 1 | Small bottle best coach body varnish. | |
| 1 | “ varnishing brush. | |
| 1 | 100-yds. spool, No. A, best scarlet machine silk. | |
| 1 | sheet each, fine and extra fine sand-paper. | |
| 10 | yds. Good line for winding hand grasp, colour to fancy. | |
| 1 | lb. each, powdered pumice stone and rotten stone. | |

The possession of the necessary tools, work-bench, etc., is, of course, assumed, and expense in purchasing these cannot fairly be charged to the cost of making the rod.



And now to work : commencing with the butt piece, which you will plane down clean and true to a *square* slightly more than seven-eighths ($\frac{7}{8}$) of an inch. Mark off 13 inches from one end to form the butt or handle at which point the diameter is to suddenly diminish to that of the small end of the winding check, and continue to evenly diminish on a *true taper* to the small end where the ferrule is fastened. To guide you in reaching this result, take the ferrule and mark its circle exactly in the centre of the end of the wood, and plane it down square in a diminishing diameter, say from half an inch at the handle to three-eighths at the small end, taking care to plane all sides equally so that the diminished size of the rod will spring true from the centre of the butt and taper equally on all sides down to that of the ferrule end. It may be necessary to use your wood-file in working close to the handle where even a small plane cannot well be used. To avoid the strain of planing in the usual way *against* a bench plug, bore a hole each way through the butt three-quarters to one inch from the end, drive a pin, made of a strong wire nail with the head filed off, in your bench, drop the wood on to this and plane *from* this hold-fast. Use this method with all the pieces, and