

FISHING TACKLE AND SPORTSMAN'S EQUIPAGE.

The Committee have not been obliged to decide between competitors for excellence, but having found it in one department, they have no hesitation in recommending for the first medal, in that line, the specimens presented by Messer & Co., 208 Washington street, of American manufactured Angling Rods.

Heretofore no attempt has been made in this country, beyond the immediate orders of amateurs in the art, to manufacture rods, particularly for fly fishing, as an article of supply for the general demand; and yet it is believed that from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars are annually paid for angling rods imported from England and Canton. It cannot, therefore, in merely a pecuniary point of view, be an unimportant item in American skill and industry, to secure this product within our own resources. The Committee attach to it a consideration of higher value, regarding as they do the cultivation of a refined taste for manly rural sports, and particularly the contemplative, quiet, healthful angle, as intimately connected with the preservation of a sound mind in a sound body.

An amusement that could draw the profound Paley from his studies; make Sir Humphrey Davy forget his experimental philosophy in his practical fly-fishing; and give the learned Professor Wollaston more delight in the discovery that a piece of India rubber would straighten his gimp, than in the solution of a problem - instead of being what the surly Dr. Johnson once defined angling: " a rod with a fool at one end and a worm at the other," may well be held as an art that none but a fool would sneer at; and which none but a true philosopher and a pure lover of nature can fully appreciate.

Happily there are no exclusive game laws here, and this healthful enjoyment is free to all who can relish it, at the proper season, provided they have the true spirit of an angler, who finds his pleasure in the pursuit, and counts it no bad success to have passed a day in the midst of nature, where he might have caught a fish, though he got only a nibble!

The rods by Messer & Co. are manufactured at Westfield, in this State, and may be furnished to any extent and of every grade of price. Use has proved them to be equal to the English; and as they can be afforded at half the cost of the imported article, it must be the interest of dealers to supply their stock from this source. The samples presented at the Fair are not the best the manufacture affords, and were taken from the stock in the shop without reference to a public exhibition. The Salmon Rod, for instance, though a highly finished stick, can be afforded for \$8; while the best of the kind made at Westfield, are valued at \$20, — one of which the Committee have seen and greatly admired, made for the Hon. Daniel Webster, another eminent disciple of the angle, who can throw a fly as well as expound a Constitution. No rod superior to it can be imported for double the price.

There are admitted to be many kinds of wood in this country better adapted for the rod than any in England, — such as our varieties of ash and hickory, the lance wood and the sassafras. We see no reason to doubt that every variety of angling rod can be manufactured at Westfield in as high perfection as the imported article, and at half the cost, and that another year will establish this fact beyond foreign competition.

Mr. Messer is confident of being able to throw the balance further toward the butt, without increasing the weight of the rod, which is the only really desirable improvement we find wanting. A Silver Medal.