# THE SHE MAN'S ALLIGATOR.

*A STORY THEY TELL DOWN ON THE CALOOSAHATCHIE RIVER.*

**Meeting of a Man with a Past, a Trained Saurian in Search of Supper, and a Pirate's Descendant in a Part of Florida Where Hunters Find Many Kinds of Surprises.**

JACKSONVILLE, May 3.—"The She Man of the Caloosahatchie is a tradition in that part of Florida, and he was also a fact," said an old hunter. "I have met him, and, even more he has told me his story; so that the mystery about him may be dismissed. I met him first one winter when I was on the Caloosahatchie River, with 'Gator Joe, who is whimsical in regard to his hunting grounds, passing from one to another as 'something tells him' to. The charms of this Southern river, surely the loveliest lowland stream anywhere, detained me with the same fascination as the 'gator richness of the shady mud banks and deep, Dantean coves did my guide.

"The second week out we brought up at the haunts of the Long brothers, who have only one leg between them, but are determined and successful alligator hunters, for all that. They offered us the freedom of the woods and waters with a quaintly chum ny manner. It was nearing the end of a day of disappointments—to me, I mean—for the countrymen had bagged all the game, while I had nothing to chronicle except a veratious series of toilsome mishaps. The four full-grown saurians that 'Gator Joe regarded with complacency, so pardonable, were hateful in my sight.

"'That's a pile of 'gator,' he said. 'I never had a finer haul. It'll take me the rest o' the day to skin 'em, so I reckon I'll stop.'

"'I'll make one more trial,' said I. 'If I can secure that big fellów gazing at us with such cool impudence, the day won't be a failure.'

"'I'm not a poor sportsman, by any means, but it was my unlucky day. Though the reptile was uncommonly fierce and bold, making a target of himself repeatedly, I did not quiet him under six shots. Elated, I sprang into the river to secure my game.

"'Mind, Mr. Hosmer, he's jest the kind of a sharp devil to be playin' 'possum' called out 'Gator Joe as I did so.

"'Dive! Dive!' screamed Dick Long the same instant. The warning was barely in time. My hand scraped the creature's great, expanded jaw as I dived, and finding another monster down there ready to gobble me up, I had no time to use my knife on either, no course, in fact, but the humiliating one of getting to shore as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, 'Gator Joe's better luck and greater experience had enabled him to despatch the wounded reptile.

"'A sloggorne close shave,' remarked Dick, as I scrambled to dry land. 'Must be a taste in the Caloosahatch ter-day that makes the creeters cantankerous. Yander's the other feller, Mr. Hosmer. You'd better jeame draw my beat on him.'

"Something—was it man or woman?—threw itself on the rifle. It wore the wreck of a poor woman's dress, but the long, thin legs, seen plainly through the slits of the petticoat, were unmistakably masculine.

"'Don't shoot,' say my 'gator; it's Devil,' this creature cried. 'I'll send him back to his pool. He ain't done his work yet; when he has, I don't care who rips off his hide. Go back, Devil; it ain't quite reedin' time. I'll fetch you some squirrels ter supper. Git back, sir!'

"He pointed down the river, waving his arms in a peculiar fashion that the alligator seemed to understand and obey.

"'Deemenetty!' exclaimed Dick, to whom this performance was always a novelty. 'Did you ever see the like? I don't wait ter show yer pet; there ain't no harm in him that I knows of. Less all go back ter the camp.'

"'He'll go with me; his head's cut,' said the nondescript, indicating me, and starting off as if sure I would follow.

"'Well,' said Dick, starting after him, 'that's the first time he ever invited anybody home with him. What does it mean?' I wouldn't go, Mr. Hosmer; there ain't no telin' what's in that consarned old head o' his'n.'

"'Is he as crazy as he looks?' asked 'Gator Joe. 'Who is he, anyhow?'

"'Why, he's the She-Man of the Caloosahatchie,' said Dick. 'Us boys called him that when he tookened ter wearin' his dead wife's clo'es, 'n' it's stuck to him, 'specially as we don't know any other name fer him. He's got sense enough to make a living fer his own pap, 'n' that's all he needs. Of course, he's kinder huny, or he'd a bought new clo'es when his old uns wore out. His trousers went fust, 'n' he put on a skirt; then some kind of a waist replaced his shirts. When his hats give clean out he ripped the trimmin' off his bonnet, 'n' made it into a down south sunbonnets. There never was anything so ridiculous, but there ain't nerve enough on this river to make fun of him to his face. One look outen them burnin' black eyes o' his'n 'd dash most anybody. Besides, he's made us respect him. Pore 'n' weakly 'n half crazy as he looks, he's allers had a ready hand ter help—though he won't have none of our help—a fist that could floor the strongest, a fleet foot, 'n' honesty above suspicion. The fust time he appeared in a calikier skirt we commenced ter laugh; but we druther laugh up a hurry, 'n' fill 'n' doubt there's somethin' stickin' to him as black as his looks; there must be, with so much mystery. His Devil, indeed, 'n' the work he's got fer him ter do! Maybe you're some o' the material, Mr. Hosmer. You're the only human he's ever wanted in his secret; leastwise, I wouldn't go.'

"'But the fact that he had unbent to me, of all mankind, was sufficient to decide me, even had he been personally repellent to me, which he was not. Besides the tattered skirt, he wore a sacque of ancient cut, belted with a dressed snakeskin, and a soiled sunbonnet, the front turned back to leave his vision unimpeded. His emaciated form, exposed in many places, his dark, leathery face and scant, grizzled whiskers peering from this woman's garb made a living scarecrow of him; yet it was a scarecrow that no one would ridicule manner commanded my respect.

"'I easily overtook the She-Man, and then he hurried me to his cabin and applied a healing ointment to my slight scalp wound. That done, he made some sassafras tea, which a soothing to the blood, and placed upon an improvised table some very well-cooked cold corn-pone and stewed catfish. He had thrown aside the sacque and sunbonnet; the coarse chemise displayed still more openly the feebleness of his frame. But for the deep, eager, haunting eyes one might easily fancy him an animated skeleton. That was the beginning of our strangely assorted friendship. It never found expression in words, for his gloom and taciturnity remained unchanged. I was often in the homely cabin, bare now of every requirement of civilization. Tins and crockery had long given way to gourds and wooden bowls, to a pile of raw cotton, into which he burrowed like a mole. We would sit there by the hour, I with my pipe, he with his eyes fixed on a small blaze in the rude hearth; for the weed had not been grown that could afford him solace. I believe his thoughts never wavered from his grief or his wrongs. I was sure that he would one day unbosom himself. I knew when the moment arrived, though he had not uttered a word. I smoked out my pipe, laid it down on the cypress block that did duty as a seat and asked, quietly:

"'How was it?'

"He manifested no surprise at the question. He merely tucked his skirt under his creaking knee joints and began:

"'It commenced in the beginnin' of the war, when Morgan, the biggest bigbug of our settlement, got mad with me because I didn't vote fer his son ter be Captain of our comp'ny 'n' hendered others from votin'. You see, I knowed Morgan well; him 'n' his seed, breed, 'n' generation. A cruel master would be a bad Captain. 'n' a man that oppressed the pore whites wasn't likely ter have any consideration fer the privates under him. Besides, the Morgans had pirate blood in e'm. It was their great-great-uncle Morgan that used ter rake the seas fer plunder 'n' come ter the Flordy coast ter hide it. So his son had ter go as third lieutenant in another comp'ny, 'n' he never fergive me fer it. I knowed he wouldn't. One of my kin had jest died 'n' left me this clearin,' the only one in fifty miles, 'n' I moved my wife 'n' child on it, buffore I went in the army. The land'd make plenty o' corn 'n' cotton; there was hoodels o' game in the woods; it wouldn't matter ef they didn't see nobody tel I come home, fer my wife could do man's work 'n' woman's, too, 'n' they was as well off as most pore whites endurin' of the war.

"'Well, I was one o' the lucky ones; come out without a scratch 'n' found my fam'ly all right, with no hole of a debt fer me ter step into. I let 'em finish their little crap, 'n' went ter work clearin' a bigger piece fer next year. I don't reckon there was any pore white fam'ly in Flordy better fixed fer livin' than we was, 'n none happier, I'm shore.

"'One day I went down ter the river ter git out a cypress knee fer a well bucket, 'n' met old Morgan as he was landin' from a sailboat. I didn't know which was the most astonished, me or him.

"'"How did you come here?" he asked.

"'"This is my own place," I said. "My fam'ly lived here all through the war."

"'"How many in the settlement? I didn't know there was anybody but wild beasts out here."

"'"I'm the settlement," said I. "The nigh-est neighbor is fifty mile off 'n' the Post Office sixty."

"'That seemed like good news to him. He said he believed he'd stay awhile 'n' take a peep at the country. I couldn't do less than invite him ter the house, though I'd a heap rather have takened in a man-eatin' gator. One dark night he takened Jimmy off fire-huntin'. The boy was a born hunter 'n' could guide yer ter the best game, day or night, but I liked it so little that I concluded ter set up tel they come back. I fidgeted tel I made my wife fidget, 'n' then somethin' had ter be done. Git a mother uneasy, 'n' you mought as well try ter quiet a scared catamount.

"'"We'll fetch Jimmy home," she said.

"'I told her one was enough ter go out in the night; but she'd got roused 'n' nothin' 'd stop her. She wouldn't go my way; the way we mought, in reason, expect ter find him; her instinck was shorer than that. "You go the way you know; I'll go the way I feel," she said.

"'I seed she had her knife 'n' pistol, 'n' warned her ter look out for varmints. Then I struck out, 'n' s'arched all the likely places without seein' a light or hearin' a sound. By that time I was plumb wild; had jest sense enough ter hunt up my wife, 'n' make shore she was safe, anyhow. I run on, callin', callin'. Everything in the woods mought er be'n dead 'n' rotten fer all the answer I got; all the sound I heard. Then, all at oncet, I fell up agin her, knockin' her down. Though she breathed, she was cold 'n' stiff. I knowed then that my boy was gone; so I takened his mother home in the breakin' dawn 'n' put her ter bed. I seed fire through the chinks, 'n' run out back ter see what it was. It was the old house, that we'd jest that night moved outer, settlin' inter coals. I hadn't time then ter wonder how it ketched, but hurried to my wife, who was very low. When I'd got her warmed through with corn whiskey inside 'n' hot quilts outside, I kneeled down by the bed like kneelin' ter God, 'n' begged her ter tell me where ter find Jimmy. When she found voice it was only ter screech, 'n' from that she fell into a fever, knowin' nothin' fer the longest. Jest buffore she died she come to her senses 'n' told me.

"'Mr. Hosmer, Morgan had come here jest like the old pirate Morgan had sneaked into Appalachicola Bay ages ago with his blood-stained booty. All through the war, while me 'n' my wort was fightin' fer his niggers, he had stole cotton 'n' housed it on his place, nobody suspicionin' him because he was a bigbug. The very day there come news of the surrender, he lit out for Savannah, 'n' sold his cotton at a big price. He hadn't much ter delivered it when evidence cropped up through his own niggers, their oaths bein' then as good as a white man's, of his havin' stole full half of it from his neighbors, 'n' he disappeared. Of course, I found all this out afterward. Buffore he left the State he buried the money; it was in the blood, remember—'n' pitched on these shores, where he supposed nobody had settled yet. Findin' us here, 'n' the only family in many miles, the devil's own idea, which is ter say' a pirate's, popped in his head, 'n' he stayed on ter kerry it out.

"'Instead of fire-huntin', he takened Jimmy ter help him fetch the box of money from the boat 'n' dig the hole fer it. My wife got in sight of 'em jest as they was sinkin' the box by the light of a dark lantern. It was such a queer thing fer them ter be doin' that she stood still 'n' s'arred. She couldn't have had an idea that Jimmy was in any sort of danger. But it was ony fer a minute. As Morgan riz up with the pirate blood b'ilin' in him, he jumped on my boy 'n' stuck a knife in his throat. The mother's marrer froze. She had no more power ter move than one er the dead stumps around her. She watched the boy fall dead 'n' Morgan throw the body in the hole on top of the money box, doublin' it up ter git in. What fer! Why, ter guard the treasure. Pirates allers do it. The spirit of the murdered is chained to the place 'n' keeps treasure seekers scared away. I thought everybody knowed that.

"'My wife seed him fill in the hole 'n' kiver it with bresh ter hide it. He went away, but she stayed in that frozen state tel I found her. After he had done the deed, Morgan must have fired the old house, thinkin' ter burn us up in it.

"'My wife buried, I set ter work huntin' my boy's body. I thought I knowed where I found his mother, but it seemed not. 'n' she, pore creeter, hadn't noticed any landmarks. I never have struck the spot. I went ter my old home 'n' pieced out Morgan's story, as I've told it, then back ag'in 'n' settled down with my life purpose—ter find my boy's bones 'n' bury 'em long with his mother's. There's a way ter do it, ef I live long enough. Morgan is bound ter come after that money, 'n' then I'll track him to the place. Afterward? Well, you know, where my 'gator pool is, 'n' you've seed Devil in it; not a worse devil, but a bigger, stronger devil than Morgan. I've raised him 'n' tutored him, 'n' always he gits fresh meat. 'n' he won't take nothin' but what I give him. Maybe you kin guess what'll be his last meal, on the day when the Lord puts Morgan in my clutches. Oh, yes, that day's comin,' 'n' soon, fer I can't last much longer. Feel this bad—look at the beads on my neck. But God is a just God, 'n' won't take me tel I've met Morgan, 'n' when the time comes he'll give me the strength.'

"The story, of course, sounded like one told by a crazy man. But you can hear the sequel to it any time you care to go to the Caloosahatchie. The story is that Morgan did come back. He came alone and secretly, as if to recover his buried treasure, and the She-Man saw him land from his boat and followed him. Such was the irony of fate or chance, the very tree at which the father had stopped, discouraged in his search, was where the man began to dig. As the stranger rapidly turned over the soft earth the She-Man leaned forward with straining sight until the spade threw out a human bone. That was enough. The next moment the She-Man's face facing the danger, who recoiled at the sudden surprise, and was still further confused by the uncanny figure in a petticoat, the dark, terrible face menacing him from the torn brim of a sunbonnet.

"'Who are you, for God's sake!' he cried.

"'Call on the devil, for God has given you inter my hands. Man, I'm Jim Banes.'

"Morgan staggered backward, dropping his spade. Face to face with vengeance, justice, his nerve left him. The pirate blood, which is, after all, coward blood, deserted him at the utmost, never was brief, for hate and deadly resolve had made a giant of the She-Man. Alone he bound the child-murderer, alone he dragged him to the pool where Devil was awaiting his evening meal, and, with a final effort, flung him to the gaping jaws. His work done, the She-Man dropped to the earth.

"'I didn't think ter give out so quick,' he whispered to a neighbor who found him dying later. 'I can't finish. But you'll gether them bones, won't you, 'n' put 'em in the mother's grave?'

"That is about the last sentence he spoke, and he died not long after. And the story's become a tradition of the Caloosahatchie. Morgan's treasure! Oh, I don't know. Maybe it's there yet. But you can have all the sport you need on the Caloosahatchie without hunting for such things.'

*INAUGURATION DAY IN APRIL.*

**A Constitutional Change Based on Washington Weather—Arguments for the Change.**

What is known as Senatorial resolution 83 otherwise "the Chandler amendment," proposes an alteration in the Federal Constitution, which in order to become effective must secure (as it is generally believed that it will) the assent of the Legislatures of two-thirds of the States. There are now forty-five States, and the assent of two-thirds means the approval of thirty, a larger number than there were in the whole country fifty years ago, when, in May, 1848, the proposition to admit Wisconsin as a State was passed upon favorably, the number previous to that time being twenty-nine. The proposed constitutional amendment makes—beginning in 1901, following the next Presidential election—April 30, instead of March 4, the inauguration day.

It is a peculiar circumstance, which students of American history have not failed to observe, that while the provisions of the Constitution regarding the method of choice of the Chief Magistrate are vague and indefinite, the provision, which is Article XII. of the amendments, for the inauguration of the President on "the 4th day of March next following the election" is explicit. As to the choice of President it is provided only that each State shall appoint, "in such manner as the Legislature thereof may direct," a number of electors equal to the total number of Congressmen allotted it, Senators and Representatives. There may be a popular vote for those electors, as in most States there is, but this is not obligatory. The Legislature itself may choose the electors, without the intervention of the voters, except in so far as this action is prohibited by State constitutions.

In some States at present Colorado conspicuously women vote for Presidential electors on the same terms as men, and in some States even aliens, not yet citizens of the United States, participate in such choice of electors. While this branch of the matter of Presidential elections is left without any general rule, the time for inauguration of the President is a part of the organic law of the country, and cannot be altered except by formal change in the Constitution, as is now proposed. It is a somewhat curious fact, too, in connection with this agitation for a change, that April 30 was originally the inauguration date. George Washington, the first President, was inaugurated in New York city on April 30, 1789. The second inaugural in Washington, however, was on March 4, 1793, and the twelfth article of the amendments, which prescribes March 4 as the date, was proposed in the first session of the eighth Congress, and was adopted on Sept. 25, 1804.

The reasons now advanced for its change to the original date are chiefly meteorological and based upon the weather conditions, which are most unsatisfactory and even dangerous in the city of Washington in early March. Incidental to the inauguration of a President there are, of course, many changes in the Federal Administration (though these are fewer than heretofore), of which he is the chief. Thousands of sightseers are drawn to the national capital at this period, along with those whose presence is required or, if not always required, is certainly desired and it is believed generally, and the weather conditions in Washington favor this view, that April 30 would be a more appropriate time for such observances and festivities as the inauguration of a President.

Against the choice of this date, however, is one objection, which, though not urged in the Senate, is likely to be brought up for consideration in the various States. It is this: The President is voted for on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November. From that time until his inauguration four months elapse—four months of uncertainty, indefiniteness, negotiation and active political rivalry. During those four months the outgoing Administration is practically helpless to enunciate any policy or to carry out any plans. These devolve upon its successor. The proposed constitutional amendment would add to this period of uncertainty nearly two months, and it is a question whether the more desirable condition of the Washington uncertain climate at the end of April compared with what it is at the beginning of March would justify a change, adding nearly two months of uncertainty and dissatisfaction for the great body of American electors, who, while participants in the election, take, and seem to desire to take, no overt part in the formality of inaugurating the President.

# FUN OF A MOCKING BIRD.

*QUEER THINGS SEEN BY A LOVER OF NATURE IN LOUISIANA.*

**The Bird's Rehearsing Its Summer Repertory—Automatic Hawk Killer—Novel Trap for Moles—Sagacity of the Mud Turtle—Rain Imitations by Woodcocks and Quails.**

BENTON, La., May 4.—Bob Wyche, who ran for Sheriff here once and got beaten and has since devoted himself to raising cotton and 'possums and 'coons and queer theories about animals, was in town yesterday with a story about a mocking bird, or rather, a pair of them, that have been building in an oak near his back yard. He has let his crop get into the grass while watching them, but as he has learned something new he thinks he is ahead of the game. Wyche believes that the eyes of all the lower animals have magnifying lenses in them, and that any object seen by them seems many times its natural size. Else, he asks, why should a horse shy violently at a rabbit and an elephant trumpet its terror when it sees a mouse? To the fact that man's eye does not magnify he ascribes his dominion over nature, declaring that if Adam had started out handicapped with the elephant's disadvantages of vision he would have been frightened to death before going twenty yards from the front gate of Eden. But about these mocking birds.

The male appeared a month ago, dressed in his spring suit of gray, white and dark brown. He proved himself an old acquaintance by giving a bad imitation of the whistle of the upland plover, a trick he had learned from Wyche while listening to him practicing about the place last fall. The fact that he learned the note from the man was proved by its inaccuracy. If he had learned it from the bird it would have been perfect. He looked over the oak carefully, and, having found a crotch near the top that suited him, perched himself on a swinging limb and went over his repertory. Wyche was interested, because he has held the theory that mocking birds have bad memories, and forget in the winter much that they learned in the summer months. This bird proved it. He essayed the love call of the quail, the cackle of the laying hen, the chirp of the scissor-tail that goes to South America in the cold months, the raucous song of the "French mocking bird," and many other sounds common in the Louisiana summer, and made a failure of them all. He tried them repeatedly, but missed, his voice going away into a sort of ashamed quaver. He was well up in the notes of northern birds that had wintered around him, and was especially strong on the call of the wild duck, the honk of the goose, and the scream of the blue heron, but his old gift of soft, endless song was gone. Finally he gave it up and flew away rapidly, seeing that his listener was laughing.

He was back again the next morning with his wife, a female of the previous season's breeding and some six or seven years his junior. The mocking bird never has the same mate two seasons in succession. He goes through life along the lines of "a fresh wife for every village." He showed her the limb fork he had selected for the nest, and she set at work instantly. Meanwhile he practiced. His work during all the building week consisted wholly of entertaining his industrious mate with song and warning off intruders. He did not once lower his dignity by bringing a twig or a horsehair, nor did he feed her. She worked unceasingly, getting her food as best she could, and he sang. The rapidity with which he recovered his powers was wonderful. In ten days he was at his best. Every sound of the woodland was at his command. Satisfied with himself at last, he forsook song for awhile, and brought worms to his wife, who was hugging the nest. The little ones are now out of the shell, and the wife is doing the feeding. The male is again in the full tide of minstrelsy. The neighing of colts, the bleating of calves, the crowing of cocks and the clucking of hens, things he has picked up about the Wyche place, are common with him.

It is his delight to perch upon the highest branch of the oak and remain mute until the yard is filled with hens leading their spring broods in search of food. Suddenly from his tiny throat sounds the shrill, terrible scream of the questing hawk, and as the chickens scurry to shelter he gives a perfect imitation of laughter, dancing excitedly up and down and flapping his wings in a delirium of joy. He can neither understand nor pardon their terror, for the mocking bird, next to the king bird, is the greatest fighter for his weight in the ornithological kingdom and fears no foes. He will chase any hawk that appears near his home or attack and defeat any crow that attempts to despoil his young. He is chased in turn only by the king bird, called here the bee martin, though occasionally his pugnacity gets the better of his discretion and he is mauled or his young destroyed in retaliation. Wyche's mocking bird varies in song capacity just as men and women do. The one now near the Wyche home, according to Wyche, is a treasure. The naturalist has not been getting much sleep of late, because the nights are moonlit and the bird, named Hill by him, sings from muffled till silver-shodden dawn. Bill, it is to be noted, will turn his new family out of doors in a few days and drive them away, showing up a little later with a newer and plumper wife, who, in turn, will do the work and raise children while he sings. Such is the sinful failing of the mocker. He is a heaven-born minstrel all right, but he is immoral.

Wyche, who is a silent man unless set going upon his mania, spends much of his time in the fields and woods and learns strange things. He says that the hen hawk is one of the most intelligent of the things of air, but is hampered with an uncontrollable temper. It has been his practice to get this temper aroused and thereby lead the hawks to their destruction. The result is that he has killed more hawks than any man in Louisiana, a section of land where in the dawn of the empyrean is especially common. He does it in this way: It is the habit of the hawk to alight only on bare limbs—the limbs of dead trees by preference—because from such coigns of vantage his vision is unobstructed by leaves. His eye, which is remarkably keen, gives him a wide range and he cannot be stalked by a man with a gun. Down on the far edge of Wyche's field, half mile from the house, Wyche has erected a pole nearly fifty feet high, and across the top of it he has fastened a scythe painted black and with the edge turned up and ground to a razor sharpness. The hawk that alights upon the scythe perches his feet carefully upon the edge, glances impatiently and shifts his position, which results in a worse cut. The moment he feels the second sting and sees his own blood he becomes possessed of a blind fury and attacks the scythe with beak and talon. Flying a short distance away he wheels and swoops upon it, only to fall torn and bleeding. So savage is his onslaught that almost always he is dead before he touches the ground. Not infrequently his lower mandible is severed and sometimes his head is struck clear off from his shoulders. Often the bodies of a half dozen hawks, the beautiful feathers drenched in blood, hang about the Wyche place, a warning to the tribe.

The man who wanted to be Sheriff is about the only person in Bossier parish not troubled by moles in his garden. He catches them as soon as they make their appearance and puts an end to them. The moles of this section are large dark gray animals, blind as a bat, of course, and speedy underground. The amount of dirt they will get through in the course of a day's work is surprising. Running along under half hour is surprising. Running along under half an inch of the peak, they are capable of doing much damage in a night or day. Being blind, they work at all hours. It is difficult to catch them in an ordinary way, because when a mole hears the stroke of a spade he dives, as it were, and goes down a great deal faster than a man can follow him. His misfortune is that it is his habit, unless disturbed, to travel near the surface, and he leaves a pronounced ridge along the ground showing the course he has taken. Wyche wastes no time in digging for him. He has a method of his own for exterminating the pest. Ascertaining by the shape of the tell-tale ridge the direction in which the mole is headed, he sticks a cow's horn in the ground with the orifice downward. Then he goes to the ridge and begins to tap upon it with a switch. The mole, hearing the noise, moves slowly but steadily forward until he comes to the horn, which he enters. His pursuer pulls it up, shakes him out upon the ground, puts his foot on him, and ends him.

Wyche's explanation of the large number of headless perch and bass found floating in the waters near here is a curious one, and he offers to demonstrate its truth to any one who can and will spare the time to accompany him to any one of the small bodies of water with which the land hereabouts is dotted. He says that the work of decapitation is accomplished by the ordinary hard-shell turtle, the *Chelonia*, which the negroes call "mud turtle." The capture is one of the strangest things in nature, betraying sagacity that no one would look for in the unlovely body and idiotic leer of the turtle. The darkies give him credit for great brain power, which is in line with Uncle Remus's glorification of "Brer Terrapin," and Wyche says that he deserves every bit of it. The hard-backed water turtle of the Louisiana bayous is not unlike dark brown mud in color. When he is in quest of prey he renders the deception even nearer perfection by burying himself in the slimy ooze of the bottom until only his head is left projecting. He has a long and very narrow tongue, which he is able to eject from his mouth to a distance of an inch or an inch and a half beyond his lips. He sticks out his tongue and "lays low." Waving gently backward and forward in the water, the tongue looks like nothing in the world so much as an angleworm out of the element. The perch nibbles at it and the loss dashes at it. In either case, the iron jaws close with a lightning snap and there is a dead fish around. Sometimes the turtle pursues the drifting carcass and makes a meal of it. Sometimes he contents himself with the head, which is always severed from the body just back of the gills. Fish brains are loved by the turtle, and if he is not especially hungry he regales himself upon this morsel, climbs upon a log, and goes to sleep with 130 degrees Fahrenheit of sun pouring upon his armored back.

THE SUN's naturalist, who lives at Chester, N. Y., said the other day that woodcock caught worms by boring holes in the ground and drumming with their wings upon the surface in imitation of rain, thus luring their prey from lairs in the earth. That is a reversal, Wyche says, of the practice of the bird in this section. Here it beats upon the ground with its wings and dances up and down steadily in one spot before burying its bill in the soft soil. Its object is supposed to be to bring the worms nearer to the top. Wyche adds that the practice of drumming with the wings in exact imitation of a summer shower is a common practice of the hen quail which has a brood to take care of in dry seasons. He avers also that no man with his eyes shut can distinguish between this sound and the patter of rain drops, and that the ruse is invariably successful. He says that he has listened to it and observed the mother bird hard at work many times while lying concealed on the slope of some pine-clad hill. He does not go to the length of saying that he has ever been wet by it, thereby missing an opportunity.

*TROUTING PROSPECTS.*

**The Early Season Unprofitable, but the Outlook for Better Things Later.**

MILFORD, Pa., April 30.—Although the trout-fishing season has been open by law elsewhere in Pennsylvania and in New York State for some time, the legal opening in Pike county does not begin until to-morrow, May 1, or, this year, if the angler is law abiding, not until Monday, May 2, for it is against the law to fish on Sunday in Pennsylvania. The wisdom of this Pike county law in postponing the trout-fishing season in this mountainous locality until May has been many times made manifest, but never more strikingly than this year.

Although the streams in the neighboring counties had the embargo of the law removed from them a fortnight ago, the embargo of the elements remained, and trout fishing has been trout fishing not much more than in name thus far. As a matter of fact, the embargo of the elements is a more effectual protector of the trout streams hereabouts than the embargo of the law. There were more trout taken in this and the adjoining counties during the warm, May-like days of early March than have been taken from any of the streams since the legal season opened in April. Rain, snow, snow water, and uniformly November weather have made the opening season of 1898 anything but pleasant or profitable to the sportsmen, if they may be called sportsmen whose idea of sport is dragging lank and spiritless trout from swollen, ice-fringed brooks and going home and boasting of it. May 1 is sufficiently early for the opening of the trout season in these mountain regions. May 15 would be better. If the law should say that the season should not open until May 15, 1900, it would be better.

But although the early trout season in the bordering New York counties has not been anything to cheer enthusiastic but misguided anglers, the prospect for a profitable and enjoyable later season has not been finer for years, according to all reports from trouting centres, and for this anglers should give thanks to the elements, that have prevented much early fishing. The Delaware Valley counties, on both sides of the river, were formerly the seats of numberless sawmills and tanneries. Scarcely a stream was free from the effects of these industries. Economical causes have led to the total disappearance of the tanneries, and sawmills are now few and far between. It is unpleasant to reflect, however, that the causes that led to the disappearance of the tanneries and the sawmills—the destruction of the forests—have also led to the disappearance of many of the streams that once flowed through those forests, leaving but dry and rocky beds to tell the melancholy story. But the passing of the tanneries and the sawmills, although their work left a greatly reduced water supply, was quickly followed by an improvement in the trouting value of the streams that survived, and the natural increase in the native trout stock having been augmented by restocking, the streams of the Delaware River watershed may be said to have nearly approached to their old-time excellence as fishing waters.

The Delaware Valley, from the Water Gap to the head of the river, is unrivalled for its natural advantages both for fish and game, a fact that is well testified to by the persistence of the Indians in retaining that stretch of territory for their own use in all their miles of land to the Pennsylvania Proprietors. Many years after the Indians had been driven away from the Delaware Valley to distant regions and the white supremacy was established, straggling bands of red men annually returned to their old haunts to hunt and fish, especially the latter, now comprised in the counties of Pike and Wayne in this State, and in Orange, Sullivan and Delaware on the New York side of the river.

The famous waters of Pike county—the Sawkill, the Vandermark, and the Raymondskill, near Milford; the Adams, Dingmans's, and Beckw's, near Dingmans Ferry; Tom's Creek, the Big and Little Bushkill, and Saw Creek, near Bushkill—have every indication of surpassing even their great records of past seasons as prolific caterers to the pleasure of the angler. They "wintered well," and all are well protected against the lawless marauder and the pot fisherman. The Sawkill Creek alone has the reputation of having yielded to the sportsman annually for many years not fewer than 50,000 trout. These streams lie easy to the New York sportsman, and are reached by the Erie Railroad to Port Jervis. From that place, also, many of the famous Sullivan county trout waters are reached by way of the Port Jervis and Monticello Railroad.

Shohola, in Pike county, is perhaps a station from which more trout streams are within convenient access than any in the Delaware Valley, except Callicoon and Hancock. Besides the great Shohola Creek and the rhododendron-hidden Panther Brook, which are at Shohola, not fewer than ten of the eastern Sullivan county streams lie within from one to six miles of that place.

Lackawaxen, Pike county, at the junction of the Honesdale branch with the main line of the Erie; Rowland's, Glen Eyre, Kimble's, and Hawley, on the Honesdale branch, are all centres in the extensive trout region of northern and eastern Pike county, and from Hawley the Wyoming and Erie Railroad threads a wild and picturesque mountain region of Wayne and Lackawanna counties, abounding in many sheltered streams, where the trout hide. From Honesdale, at the terminus of the Honesdale branch, the Lackawaxen and the Dyberry, with their many branches, are reached. The prospects for fine fishing in these waters are excellent this season. They have been liberally stocked for several years, and last season the trouting was the best within the memory of the oldest local angler.

Between Lackawaxen and Hancock, on the main line of the Erie, a distance of a little more than fifty miles, there is at least fifty choice trout streams. Narrowsburg, Cochecton, Callicoon, Hankins, Lordville, and Hancock, in Sullivan and Delaware counties, all are close proximity to famous brooks. At Callicoon the widely known creek of that name enters the Delaware. This remarkable stream flows for several miles through the mountain regions of Sullivan county, and is fed from both sides by many brooks, all natural and prolific trout waters. Along the Callicoon Creek are the villages of Jeffersonville, North Branch, and Thumansville, all trouting centres connected with Callicoon by stage lines and distant but a few miles. Opposite Callicoon, on the Pennsylvania side of the river, in Wayne county, is Hollister Creek, one of the best of the early season trout streams.

At Hankins, seven miles beyond Callicoon, Hankins's Brook offers fine fishing, and there are half a dozen brooks a short distance back among the hills. There are no fewer than eleven prolific trout streams within from one to five miles from Hancock—Cadosia, Reed's, Sands, Shehawken, Trout, Pease Eddy, and Tyler creeks among them. The heart of the celebrated Beaverkill region is within five miles from Hancock. That paradise of trout fishermen is also easily reached from Callicoon or Hankins.

A few years ago the upper waters of the Delaware River itself were stocked with brown trout, the trout of Europe. Last season several large specimens of this great game fish were taken by black bass fishermen, and it is believed that this season this trout will furnish a new source of sport in these waters.

*THE ARMY OFFICER'S TRUNK.*

**Made More Especially for Use in Times of Peace, but Brought to Notice Now.**

The army officer's trunk, which is an article of limited but regular sale in peace times, being sold chiefly to regular army officers, is a stout, well-made trunk of rather generous proportions, so divided inside as to afford spaces for both military and civilian attire. There is a place for an officer's chapeau and one for the silk hat of a civilian and room for the different clothing, and the trunk is large enough to admit a sword laid diagonally. A trunk of this sort is made not of sole leather, as might be supposed, to withstand rough wear, but with a rigid frame, so that it can be roped or strapped onto a load, or packed with other things piled on it, in the exigencies of wagon or other transportation without being crushed or damaged.

The army trunk is brought to the front now on account of the war. It is not expected, however, that in active operations where transportation is comparatively limited, all officers will take trunks of such bulk, but rather that their use at such a time will be confined to field officers.

# HOLLAND'S FENIAN RAM.

*THE SUBMARINE BOAT BUILT TO SINK THE BRITISH NAVY.*

**Capt. Lawrence O'Brien of New Haven Tells of the Hopes Irishmen Placed in Her When She Was Built Twenty-five Years Ago—Part She Was to Play in Freeing Ireland.**

NEW HAVEN, May 7.—Here is the story of the old Fenian ram, John P. Holland's first experiment in the way of a submarine boat, as told by Capt. Lawrence O'Brien. The ram has lain for twenty years now in a shed near Mill River. O'Brien, who tells the story, was for years the leader of the Fenian Brotherhood in Connecticut and spent several years in Ireland equipping and arousing the Irish peasantry to rebellion. One of these years was passed in Clonmel jail as a penalty for his anti-British activity.

"They have always kept pretty close about the old Fenian ram," he said, "and there was plenty of reason why they should. But nearly all the men are now dead who had a hand in her building—Jim Reynolds, the leader of the movement, is gone, and a rare Irish patriot he was, too—and, besides, there is nothing to be gained by keeping the secret longer. Holland is building other vessels like the old ram, which was his first serious attempt at a submarine boat. The vessel which has caused so much interest during the past four weeks is almost exactly a reproduction of the one we have owned for twenty years. So the whole world, and above all the British Navy, possesses our secret. For that matter, England knew it twenty years ago. While we were building our boat she had hundreds of spies who kept track of all our actions day by day and reported them to the Government. I tell you what, we kept John Bull pretty busy in those old times; and there wasn't anything he was so afraid of as our submarine boat. It revolutionized the English Navy, too—but I am getting ahead of my story.

"It was about twenty-five years ago, in the early seventies, that Holland began work on his first submarine vessel. Those were stirring times. In the first place the air was full of the plots of the Fenians and the things they were going to do—how they were going to free Ireland and set up the republic. England had not forgotten our uprising in 1866 no more than we. We were not discouraged by its failure and were straining every nerve to get to work again, this time successfully. After I served my time in the civil war—I was in Cahill's regiment of Connecticut volunteers and had risen from a private to a Captain—I started over to Ireland and began to stir things up. I owe her Majesty a year's board for that now; but that's neither here nor there. You know, of course, that we hoped for aid from the United States in our plans. Our whole programme was based upon the theory that the United States were going to war with England. Everybody believed in the early seventies that this was bound to come. Englishmen were hated pretty roundly in these parts in those days. We could not forget the way she had sided with the Southern Confederacy; and, above all, the Alabama claims seemed sure to bring on a war. We Irishmen were as certain of that as we are certain that we are at war with Spain to-day. It seemed a good deal more likely that the Alabama business would bring on a war than it seemed a few months ago that the Cuban question would be settled this way. We Irishmen, of course, were crazy for war. We were ready any moment to shoulder our muskets and attack England. We would have been willing to do this for the sake of the United States alone, but we had another motive. One of the surest results of such a war, we believed, would be the freedom of Ireland.

"We Fenians, therefore, went on with our preparations. One of the first proposals came from an ingenious chap name Holland, the same man who now is world-famous for his submarine boat. Holland is an Irishman, and a mighty good and loyal Irishman, too. To be an Irishman and a Fenian in those days was the same thing, and Holland was one of the most enthusiastic Fenians of us all. How he did hate England! How we all hated England! I knew Holland well in those days. I know him well now. He was one of the cleverest fellows in the world. He had invented any number of interesting things, and we regarded him as one of the smartest chaps in the ranks. In spite of his reputation, we were all taken back when he suggested as a preparation for the coming war a submarine boat. We had read about Jules Verne's wonderful vessel, and knew that there had been a few unsuccessful experiments in that line during he civil war, but the idea had never occurred to us. Holland unfolded his plan to Jim Reynolds—Catalpa Jim—John Breslin, and a few others. He showed them how he could build a vessel that could sail under the water, launch torpedoes, and destroy the largest ships afloat. Some of us, of course, were rather incredulous, but you couldn't put Holland down in those days, any more than you can now.

"And so we told him to go ahead and build his boat—that is, Jim Reynolds and Breslin did, for I had nothing officially to do with the matter, though I was in their closest confidence through it all. To get the money was an easy matter in those days. The Fenians had plenty of money to their disposal. We used to raise a contribution of almost any amount if our people knew that it was for Ireland. And the money to build Holland's boat was raised in this way. The pennies and the dimes and the dollars came rolling in to Reynolds, who was the