ELI'S DESTRUCTIVE SPIRIT.

SMASHED NINE TOMBSTONES OVER HIS GRAVE IN A FEW MONTHS.

It Nearly Impoverished Mrs. Eli Who Vowed That Eli's "Sperit" Didn't Approve the Designs—How the Turbulent Tendencies Were Appeased and Peace Came.

"If conscience had only been an unknown quantity in my make-up," said the man of experience, "I could have made a fortune by supplying tombstones forone man's grave."

The young fellow who was lighting a cigar dropped the burning match into the waste-paper basket and turned around with a show of considerable interest.

"Great Cæsar," he said, after he had plunged his foot into the depths of the smoking paper and tramped out the fire which he had unwittingly lighted. "What kind of man was he? A giant who occupied so large a portion of the earth's area that it took a whole tombstone factory to turn out enough monuments to mark the length and breadth of his repose, or was he hacked into pieces and laid away on the installment plan, with each morsel in a grave of its own?"

"Neither of your conjectures is right," replied the man of experience, calmly. "He was just a plain ordinary man, rather under medium size than above it, and he had only one grave, just like other commonplace mortals; but in spite of his unobtrusiveness his death gave quite a boom to the tombstone business, and while supplying the stones for his grave I enjoyed a greater prosperity than at any other time in my career. In fact, as soon as his unique patronage ceased my receipts fell off to such an alarming extent that I was forced to close up my establishment and direct my efforts into other and more lucrative channels. I was a young man then, just starting into business for myself. I make this statement in the beginning as it may partially excuse me for some of the actions for which you will probably consider me quite culpable. It was a mere chance that threw me into the tombstone line. An eccentric old uncle on my mother's side of the house had been in the trade before me, and when he died and bequeathed me what little property he had, provided I would continue to traffic in headstones, I naturally stepped into his shoes and his one-horse factory, and turned my attention to the manufacture of marble doves and angels and the cutting of appropriate epitaphs.

"The person who unconsciously built up the business which had been dwindling away under my uncle's shiftless management, and made it possible for a youngster like me to earn a good living in spite of the fine health then prevalent in that neighborhood and the consequent dearth of new graves, was a man named Eli Hulick. Hulick died about a year after I inherited my uncle's property, and was laid away, in accordance with his specific request, in the family burying ground in the north pasture of his own farm. This was in the latter part of February. As soon as the frost began to get out of the ground and the earth settled, Mrs. Hulick came to my shop and gave me an order for a tombstone. The Hulicks were very well-to-do people for that part of the country, and she gave me to understand that she wanted something fine, no matter what it might cost. I had a good helper up from Lexington, Ky., then, named Jim Kyle.

"Kyle was an experienced marble cutter and a man chock full of ideas. We put our heads together on the order from Mrs. Hulick, and as a result we evolved a tombstone that was really a wonder, both as to conception and execution. Everybody in the neighborhood thronged round my shop while we were working on it, and the compliments paid to our skill and ingenuity gave me the worst case of big head I ever had in my life. There was nothing strictly original in the primitive design of that stone; it was in the working out of the details that we displayed our genius. The trimmings as you might call them, consisted of the regulation angel with his trump, but in the carving of this angel we departed from the beaten track, and when we were through with him he differed so essentially from the other members of the angel family with which my clientele was familiar that it would have puzzled a good many of the visitors to know whether he was an angel at all or not, had he not been a part of the tombstone. Our angel was not recumbent; neither did he stand stiff and straight as a ramrod, but he was poised as if ready for flight, in a position that was the personification of grace, and as such we felt very proud of him. Mrs. Hulick was also highly pleased with our endeavors, and one warm March day she and Kyle and one or two of the farm hands and myself went over to the pasture burial ground and set the stone over Eli's head.

"This back pasture was an out-of-the-way part of the estate, and, so far as I know, nobody went near the new-made grave for two weeks. Then one evening, as I was locking up my shop preparatory to going away for the night, who should come rushing up the path toward me but Mrs. Hulick.

"'Mr. Jackson,' she gasped in great excitement, 'just guess what has happened.'

"Now that was a poser, even for a man who was able to manufacture a new style of angel, for in that quiet country place anything, or, what was more probable, nothing, was apt to happen at any moment. I admitted that I could not hazard a guess on a subject so fraught with infinite possibilities, and I asked Mrs. Hulick to tell me the worst at once. She began to cry then, bitterly, and I shall never forget how she looked when she raised her head and spluttered out, between sobs:

"'Eli's g-g-grave!'

"She stopped short at that, literally choked up with tears and invisible emotion.

"'Well,' said I, 'what about it?'

"The sperits has been at work on it,' she blubbered, at length. 'You just ought to see your tombstone, Mr. J-Jackson. It's b-been h-hacked into m-mince m-meat.'

"I had sat down on a bench outside the shop-door at the beginning of her sob-laden explanation, but at her allusion to my tombstone I jumped to my feet in a hurry. I was not much worried over the mincemeat phase of the question, for I was fully aware of the indigestible nature of my angel, but the thought that all my careful handiwork had been shattered into fragments made me turn faint for a moment.

"'How do you know this, Mrs. Hulick?' I demanded.

"'I was over there this afternoon and saw it,' she said. 'I felt kind o' funny all the way going over, just as if something was wrong, and when I climbed the last fence and got in a position where I could get a good look at the graveyard and couldn't see anything of Eli's tombstone, I thought I'd surely drop. Our graveyard, you know, Mr. Jackson, is on a ridge, in plain view of both sides of the pasture, and as all the other stones are old and have sunk down and got gray and weather-beaten with time, that new one of Eli's ought to stand up plain as day in the midst of the ruins. When I didn't see it there, as I ought, I was scared half out of my senses, but I plucked up courage and went on, right up close to the crowded fence. Then when I looked over and saw Eli's monument scattered around over the ground, with not a fragment of it bigger than a postage-stamp sticking together, the awfulest feeling came over me and I sank down all of a heap. As soon as I could get up enough strength to come away I ran straight over here to tell you about it.'

"Mrs. Hulick's agitation was extreme, but great as was her nervousness, it was quite plain that every word she was speaking was gospel truth and not fancy. I, too, was greatly perplexed. 'How long should you say it has been since this thing happened?' I asked, 'and who do you suppose could have done it?'

"'Land alive,' she exclaimed. 'I'm no expert in marble. I can't tell by the looks of the grain whether a piece was clipped off yesterday or last week or last month. But I do know well enough who did it. There's no question about that.'

"She paused and looked at me intently.

"'Well?' I said. 'Who?'

"'I hope,' she retorted, 'that you don't have to ask who. Why, there ain't but one person who could do it.'

"Her tone was absolutely heavy with mysterious suggestion, but even then I did not catch the drift of her meaning. Being so dull, I was obliged to ask her again, 'Well, and who is that one?'

"'For the land's sake,' she cried, 'don't you know yet? Why, it was Eli himself.'

"Her answer was so unexpected that it completely staggered me.

"'Eli?' I replied. 'Why, heavens and earth, woman, he's dead as a door nail.'

"'Well, what if he is,' she returned, loftily, 'Ain't he got a sperit?'

"This was another stunner. Never having made particular inquiries as to the ethereal portion of Mr. Hulick's existence, I was unable to answer definitely, so I said nothing.

"'Of course he has,' Mrs. Hulick went on, taking my silence for assent, 'and it's his sperit that's done the hacking and the smashing. Oh, I know Eli's sperit. It's a regular Sampson when it gets started. It's got a prodigious strength—just the kind and amount of strength needed to grind that tombstone of yours into atoms. No human being that I know of in these parts could have crushed that stone to dust as it is crushed now. But his sperit could. And his sperit has got the inclination to do it, too. I don't doubt that a mite. Often and often I've heard Eli threaten to do something like that. Many and many a time when we've been going through some cemetery looking at the stones and inscriptions, Eli'd stop short and say, "Well, mother, if anybody should ever put anything as bad as that above my head I'd come back to earth and chop it into slivers. I'll be blessed if I wouldn't." I didn't think then that he meant it, but Eli's sperit was mighty determined, and that's just what he's done. I thought a good deal of that angel of yours, Mr. Jackson, and the vines and the roses and everything. I thought the whole thing was just as nice as could be, and I didn't begrudge one cent of the $400 I paid you for it, but evidently there was something about it that Eli didn't like, so he's stuck to his word and come back and shivered it. The only thing for us to do now is to make another one and see if we can suit him any better. If he hacks the next one up we'll have to keep trying, I reckon, till we strike something he does like. I'm awfully sorry he didn't give instructions about his tombstone before he died. I ought to have asked him about it, I suppose, but I was so upset at the time that I didn't think of anything.'

"By the time I could elicit from Mrs. Hulick all the information she could give me in regard to the mutilated tombstone, it was pitch dark. I did not go over to the Hulick graveyard that night, but I was there bright and early the next morning. The widow had not exaggerated a particle in her account. Eli's spirit had certainly been on the rampath with a vengeance, for the marble slab and its decorations were completely demolished. The report of this extraordinary desecration of the resting place of the dead travelled through the village and the adjacent country with telegraphic rapidity. By noon all the population who were not blind or bedridden had made a trip to the fateful spot, that they might be eyewitnesses of the remarkable occurrence. Sympathy with the widow was most pronounced, and more than one person in the crowd ventured to condemn Eli's spirit in no uncertain language for thus despoiling his own tomb. Strange to say, not one of all the people congregated there expressed an opinion contrary to Mrs. Hulick's theory that Eli's spirit was the culprit. Nobody even thought of attributing the vandalism to human agency.

"In order to understand this remarkable phase of the incident it will be necessary to take into consideration where we lived. We were in a little town in southern Ohio at a point where hundreds of slaves were hustled across the river during war times and concealed in places of safety. Many of these refugees passed on farther to the north, but a good-sized number of them chose to remain where they landed, so our town, in time, became quite a colored settlement. These negroes were saturated with the innate superstition of their race. Contact with the whites did not seem to eradicate it. On the contrary, their beliefs and customs took a stronger hold upon them as the years passed and it was not long until the spell of their charms and incantations began to exert a strong influence over the white population. Now, if there is anybody on earth that can make a bigger fool of himself than a superstitious nigger it is a superstitious white man. You should see the ignorant white people in all those southern countries where the negro superstitions flourish, and they are more besotted in their silly fear than the colored race themselves. It was just so in our village, where fully one-half of the white population consisted of uneducated Irish and German families who had moved up from Cincinnati and added their own racial legends and myths to the deep-rooted belief in ghosts and hobgoblins that already enthralled us.

"I myself, had imbibed gruesome tales by the wholesale from my infancy. At the time of the first attack on Eli Hulick's monument, inherent common-sense was beginning to assert itself, but it was as yet only a puling weakling, and I must confess that I, in common with the rest of the excited population, had more or less faith in the presence of an evil spirit. Anyway, I had just cause to believe in it, for, profited from its depredations in a very material way, being ordered by Mrs. Hulick to turn out another $400 stone and set it as soon as possibly could. Kyle and I went to work with a will and by the middle of April the second stone was ready to be placed in position. We had both fairly outdone ourselves, and the new stone was superior, if such a thing were possible, to its predecessor.

"'The old man's got the most fastidious taste I ever heard of,' said Kyle, the day our work was completed. 'If he chops this to pieces we'll be hard put to it to think up something better.'

"I knew Kyle was right in this assertion, and everybody else knew it, but somehow Eli's spirit held a different opinion on the subject, and within less than a week after that stone was erected, it, too, had been knocked into smithereens. Excitement ran at flood tide then. The widow accepted the strange manifestation as a sign that she was doing something not agreeable to the tastes of her departed spouse, and she was fairly beside herself with anxiety to get him pacified.

"'Make another stone, Mr. Jackson,' she commanded, 'and try your level best this time to get up something that Eli's spirit will approve of. I know him, and I know he won't give us a minute's peace till he's satisfied.'

"In May I put up my third tombstone. I left off the angel altogether that trip, thinking that perhaps Eli's experience with the genuine article had proven unsatisfactory and that he had developed positive objections to angels, even though they were nothing more than marble imitations. But plainly it was not the angels that were the cause of the disturbance, for within a few days my third effort shared the fate of the first and second. This was becoming intensely interesting for me, reckoning from a financial basis. Each time Eli's spirit went on a rampage I derived an income therefrom of $400, which meant at least $200 a month, net, after deducting the cost of the marble and Kyle's labor. When I got the fourth stone ready, I entered into a compact with Mrs. Hulick whereby I agreed to furnish all the stones she might need in the future at a discount of twenty-five per cent. from the regular price. I thought this nothing more than right considering that the changes were that I should have to keep on supplying them for so long a time that not even her fat farm could hold out against the expense incurred by Eli's spirit, provided each onslaught were paid for at its face value.

"'Altogether I erected nine tombstones over Eli's grave, at the rate of one a month. This took us up to November. By that time the situation had become desperate. Mrs. Hulick had spent for specimens of carved marble just $3,500. And not only was she becoming impoverished financially by the drain, a worse trouble had arisen. She was a good-looking woman, and a prosperous farmer in the neighborhood who had long been awake to her charms, was exceedingly anxious to marry her. Mrs. Hulick, herself, was quite willing to become a party to the contract, but her conscience would not allow her to do so until Eli's spirit had been appeased. She often told me that all her woes, and in spite of the good income I derived from their source, I sympathized with her greatly.

"'The night after I put up the ninth tombstone I decided upon a bit of daring that would have been pronounced extremely foolhardy had I taken anybody into my confidence. All through the spring and summer while my sculptured images and marble shafts were being ground into nothingness, not one person in all the country round had dared approach the Hulick graveyard after twilight fell. Many of the more timorous went so far as to turn their eyes from the spot when they drew near it even in the daytime, and it was a popular belief that if anybody should look that way in the night and chance to see Eli's spirit at work, he would be prematurely blinded for his temerity. All of course, had swallowed all these tales with avidity, but in spite of their depressing effect my horse sense had continued to grow apace, and when the ninth stone had been placed in position I decided that it was time to go over to the graveyard and find out just what was happening there. It was a cold, chilly night when I made my first trip.

"'The air was thick with mist and fog and it was so dark I could scarcely see my hand before me. You may imagine that my sensations were anything but pleasant, but I braced up with a swig of whiskey I had brought along for use in case of an emergency, and prepared to watch the night through. I took up my position fair and square against the monument, for I was bound that nothing should happen without my knowledge. For hours a deathlike stillness reigned. Then along about 1 o'clock I heard the slushing of feet in the mud behind me, looking behind me where the sound proceeded, I saw a faint blur of light twinkling through the mist. My half stood on end and I lost my breath for a moment, but quickly remembering that Eli's spirit would not be apt to slop around in rubber boots, I nerved myself for the encounter. A few steps sent the light was brought so close to the tombstone that I could make out what stood behind it. Then I gave a yell like a Comanche Indian, for the man who carried the light was Jim Kyle.

"'Kyle and I were both too utterly dumfounded to say much for several minutes. But finally I recovered the use of speech and then came a confession. The fellow told his story straight from the shoulder. He had been out of work, it seems, for some time before coming to me. His hard fight with poverty had made him dread another siege of idleness, and when he saw that I wouldn't have enough to keep him going more than a week or two longer, he was desperate. With his native shrewdness he divined what a lot of superstitious fools we all were, and he worked our weak points for all we were worth. His idea of destroying the first tombstone was an inspiration. He acted upon it at a venture, and when he found what a beautiful scheme he had evolved he continued to play us remorselessly, for he saw that so long as I could get an order for a $400 monument each month, he was sure of a steady job, and he felt that he would be willing to take any amount of chances on the sentimentary to make sure of such a God-send as that.

"'Well, sir, criminal as that fellow's story was I didn't have it in my heart to be angry with him, and I'll confess that even when he suggested, in conclusion, that we continue the game in partnership as long as it promised to be safe, I had to hesitate a minute before I turned him down. Even when I did finally veto the proposition I offered to lend him a helping hand. Only that day Mrs. Hulick's ardent suitor had proposed to me that if I could design a stone that would quell Eli's restless spirit, he would give me $1,000 in cash as prize money. I explained this to Kyle and promised him that if he would lay up his hammer and chisel and retire into the peace which Eli's spirit had earned, I would never breathe his secret to a living soul, but would politely cabbage the old man's money even though it was gained under false pretences, and would go halves with him. He gladly consented to this arrangement, for he was getting pretty tired of the chopping business. This course, as suggested by me, may have savored somewhat of dishonesty, but in dealing with Kyle it was my only alternative. Of course, we might have gone on impersonating Eli's spirit until the whole Hulick fortune had been converted into tombstones, but I felt truly sorry for Mrs. Hulick and was really anxious to have her enter into the rest of which Eli's pugnacious spirit had so long deprived her. As for exposing Kyle, that, too, was out of the question. You will remember that I said in the beginning I have a conscience. That would not allow me to do either of these things so, as a last resort, I accepted the wealthy suitor's $1,000 and thus sent Eli's spirit into the limbo of eternal forgetfulness."

LYNCHED A STATE SENATOR.

A Wealthy White Man Shot Down by a Mob in Louisiana.

From the New Orleans Picayune.

LULING, La., Oct. 11.—The killing of Senator Basile Laplace by an armed mob last night has naturally created very intense excitement throughout St. Charles parish. Mr. Laplace has not been a resident of this parish very long, but his long association with State and district politics has made him a familiar figure before the public. The method of execution adopted by the crowd was, to say the least, exceedingly, but the provocation rumored here is given by the people as justification for action of the mob.

About a year or two ago Senator Laplace came from St. John parish to the old Ormond plantation, which he purchased from James McMahon. Mr. Laplace at the time of the purchase found that Edmond Troxler and his family of eight children were living in a portion of the old plantation residence. These occupants were not disturbed. On the contrary, Mr. Troxler became the manager of the estate and superintended the planting of this year's rice crop. Among these eight children, who are motherless, there is one who has arrived at the age of womanhood. Miss Lydia is a woman of very attractive presence, and constant association, a lack of worldly knowledge and a desire for the advantages to be secured by more fortunate financial conditions paved the way to an intimacy which ended in the terrible crime.

Mr. Troxler is a man who has not been placed in a position to learn many of the ways of the world. He often warned his young daughter of the dangers which might arise from too close companionship. She paid no attention to the warning, for she was only a simple country maiden and could not thoroughly understand.

About two weeks ago Mr. Troxler was taken sick with rheumatism, the result of the long hours in the rice field. On Tuesday he held a long talk with his daughter, and at the same time told her that he would leave the plantation and find some safer place for his children to live. Miss Lydia, later in the day, wrote a reply to her father, telling him she did not intend to leave Ormond plantation at all, but would remain where her heart dictated. That morning, about 9 o'clock, Mr. Troxler and the seven remaining children deserted. They were driven to the store kept by Numa Zerangue, which is situated a mile further down the road. Zerangue is a brother-in-law of Troxler's.

Miss Troxler remained at the plantation house with Basile Laplace and Augustine Caillet, who is timekeeper. The plantation residence is rather oddly constructed. There are two brick wings built separately from the main body of the house, which is a long building, extending parallel with the river bank. The wing to the right was occupied by Senator Laplace, while the other wing was occupied by Caillet.

About 9 o'clock in the evening Senator Laplace and Miss Troxler were seen for the last time by Caillet. These three occupants of the house retired about 9 o'clock, and hardly an hour later Caillet heard Senator Laplace call "Get up, we have got to go out." Caillet jumped from his bed and began dressing. Senator Laplace had previously gone to the front gallery, which is reached from his room by a narrow walk.

Before Caillet could dress he heard voices in the front yard. At this time he heard Senator Laplace cry out, A voice said: "Let's get together." He thought that meant him, and he ran down the back stairs and out into the field. He had looked out of a window and saw some thirty-five men dragging his employer. These men seemed to be masked, for their faces, he says, were white or black. That was the last he saw of Senator Laplace until after 4 o'clock in the morning, when he found the body of the planter lying flat upon his back in the public road directly in front of the house. The house is situated about 700 feet from the road.

Caillet thought that the mob wanted to lynch him also, and for that reason hid in the fields. When the plantation bells rang in the morning he returned to the quarters, where eight families are living, and he called the people to accompany him. They crossed the wide levee back separating the laborers' cabins from the residence, and they walked down the pathway to the road in front of the levee. The levee was crossed and the pasture searched, but no trace of the missing planter was found. The house had been previously searched, and Miss Troxler's room was the only place left to be empty. When they returned from the river bank, the entire party walked down a ramp at the head of the lane, and near the drainage ditch of the levee they found the body. It was then hardly 5 o'clock in the morning. Senator Laplace was lying on his back, his feet apart, and his arms extended at right angles. Near him was his cane, which he always carried, and about twenty feet away lay a white-handled revolver. Mr. Caillet wanted to carry the body to the house, but was told that the coroner would be notified. For this reason the remains were allowed to lie where they were found until the arrival of two members of the family (Robert Deltran and Albert Laplace) about 8 o'clock. A heavy rain came on during the morning, and the body lay facing the heavens which the mud spattered heavily.

Some time after the mob had carried out its terrible plan Miss Troxler repented and walked over the mile of country road to where her father and sisters had gone. It was near midnight when she knocked on the closed door. But she was anxious, and it was forgiving with the family upon whom she brought such sorrow.

Caillet, after discovering the body of Senator Laplace, rode down to the residence of Judge Emile Rost, four miles down the river, and from Judge Rost's house the members of the Laplace family were notified of the death. Judge Rost also notified the coroner of the parish and before noon an inquest was held. It was found that the Senator had been killed by a Winchester ball that was fired directly against the back. His coat had been burned and the bullet penetrated the intestines and was flattened against a revolver in the right pocket of his trousers. The mob had evidently overlooked this weapon.

Senator Laplace was a bachelor, and it is believed that Senator Laplace was induced to leave his home. He walked down the yard and was seized by the members of the mob. His hands were bound with a cotton rope, not in a sailor's knot, and this rope was bound to the latch of the gate on the front gallery. It is said that when it is believed that the arms were tied at the dinner.

The startling facts connected with the horrible shooting were all corroborated by Mr. Winchester, one of the most dramatic stories heard in years. He related the little incident which caused the way to the scene of the shooting. He was shocked at the discovery and he knew not what to do. Then he decided to leave the place. His eldest daughter refused to accompany him. He blamed the deceased for this resolution, but expressed sincere regret at the outcome. Sunday and Monday passed by. He knew nothing until his daughter pounded upon the door heartbroken and begged to be allowed to return. During his story he broke down and cried like a child. He pointed out his position as a woman with three children, who was compelled to leave his home without money, and crushed by a storm that is more terrible than even his sympathetic friends can realize. Yesterday Troxler appealed to Judge Rost for a position as night watchman, and he was accepted for the place. He left this city tonight.

The people of the parish believe that if the facts as given are true, the action of the mob had some excuse, but they condemn the cowardly means adopted to accomplish its ends. Mrs. Laplace, widow of the dead Senator, drove fifteen miles from Laplace to the scene of the crime, accompanied by her children, and this afternoon accompanied the remains to New Orleans. While Senator Laplace owned the Ormond plantation, he spent most of his time at Laplace station, in St. John parish, and only left that point last Sunday.

Largest Peach and Largest Apple.

From the Denver Republican.

The biggest peach in the world is beside the biggest apple in the world at the state house in this city. At least the records show no larger specimens than these, and Mrs. Slutz, secretary of the horticultural society, will let them as record breakers until some one "shows her," although she is not from Missouri. The fruit was grown on a farm in Montezuma county, and until measured yesterday, it was not known that the apple, which attracted so much attention in the recent street fair, was the companion of a record-breaking peach. The latter arrived early last Friday and is now embalmed at the capitol. The apple was displaced yesterday. The peach is of a rich color. It is 4¾ inches in diameter, nearly round, and weighs 21 ounces. The apple is much larger than the peach, but only half an ounce heavier. The apple measures 5 inches through one way, and 4¾ another. It is of the Wolf River variety. The weight is little more than that of the peach, because apples carry less moisture. The moisture in peaches makes them outweigh apples of a corresponding size. This apple was exhibited by J. D. Hall of Cortez, Montezuma county, at the street fair, with a number of other large specimens, but until yesterday it was not measured and weighed. He is also the contributor of the peach.

WHERE THE PIN-TAILS FLY.

THE RARE SPORT IN OCTOBER ALONG THE FOX RIVER.

Superior Skill Needed to Kill the "Leapers" of These Ducks—It Is no Game for the Mere Market Hunters—Clear Ability to Estimate Distances Is Required.

McHENRY, Ill., Oct. 20.—Out of the North, hammering the cool air with incessant wing, with long necks outstretched, making a flight that even the oldest hunter cannot tell from that of the mallard when the birds are distant, come the spring-tails, or pin-tails, one of the handsomest, gamest and most delicious of American water fowl. The Fox River at this place, and for many miles above and below it, will be frozen solidly from bank to bank by Thanksgiving Day. The birds know this, and, wishing to feed upon the wild rice while yet there is time, they come hurrying down. Among some duckmen the pin tail is known as the "Leaper," because of its ability to spring straight upward when alarmed, going often to a height of fifty feet before starting away. Of all the feathered swimmers in American waters this fellow most needs the gun held high when he jumps, and is easiest of them all to shoot under. To slay the leaping pin tail at a distance of fifty yards the hunter must "hold" at least fifteen feet above it, otherwise his name will be several things like dinner and Mud.

These birds exhibit a marked difference in the plumage of the sexes. Among all ducks the male is the gayer of attire, but in the case of the pin tail the differentiation is so strong that a tyro cannot be led to believe that they belong to the same species. The female pin tail has a long slender body and is dressed from head to heel in sober brown. Her bill of yellow is the only bright thing about her. She is a faithful creature enough, and evidently much enamored of her gaudy mate. The drabe, while not so loudly colored as the male mallard, has a plumage of a rich dove, with magpied feathers of white, green and blue. The birds are good swimmers and divers, but do not eat fish. At this time of year, when they are on their journey south, they subsist entirely upon a diet of wild celery, and the roots of the wild celery, which grows far under water. This the pin tains obtain by diving to the bottom, seizing the tough tuber in their jaws and tugging at it until it gives way. Something has to break loose—the root or the duck's head—and generally it is the root. There have been instances recorded among canvasbacks, mallards and pin tails when the bird got its bill fastened into an immovable root and miserably drowned. It is a habit of the pin tail, when desperately wounded and hard pressed, to dive and hold to something subaqueous until death comes. Realizing that escape is impossible, it prefers suicide to the table.

The most marked excellences of the pin-tail are found in the facts that it is plentiful and that it "eats good," as the market hunters say—is, in other words, a sad-feed. Indeed, when it is dressed properly and served, there are few better things on the earth or in the waters under the earth. The bird is not too large for a broiler and not too small to be baked. It is a solid ingredient to a stew, and many French cooks prefer it as a basis to gumbo. It will weigh possibly a pound less than the mallard, but decoys more easily, and is therefore better liked by duck men. Sometimes pin tails are found in flocks of a thousand or more, and they have a desire to live in one place a long time. They continue their flight southward only when forced out by cold weather or shot by the man with the gun. The note of this duck is a queer tremolo, lacking utterly the deep gutturalness of the larger birds, and any one with a little practice can imitate it successfully by blowing rapid staccato notes through a small quill. It stays in the South, once it gets there, through all of the winter months and far into the spring.

Sportsmen in that region like it principally for the good marksmanship it requires. Practice on the up and plunge of the "Leaper" is a great practice, and is likely to make a man a better shot at all kinds of game. This kind of sport can be had in quantity along the Fox River at the proper season of the year. Almost all of the birds then are in the thick beds of rice which grow on the banks. This rice, which stands eight feet high and is matted, forms excellent cover, and if a man who does not mind work will put on a pair of thigh boots of rubber, or, better still, a pair of wading "pants," he can walk through the rice and get so many of the leaping shots as he may desire. The thickness of the stalks around him, standing in many instances two feet above his head, forces him to wait until the fowl is well into view. He cannot see the bird as it flushes ten or twenty yards in front of him. He can hear only the rushing boom of the wings as they cleave the air, and this thrills him.

If the pin tail be hit fairly between the shoulders it will fall dead, but the shooter will spend a half hour in trying to retrieve his quarry. Still, it is all fun, and the hunter does not mind it. Being out for sport and not for meat, he feels often sufficiently repaid by the knowledge that he has made his kill, even though the bones and feathers get away from him. Two hundred pin tails a day are being slain along the upper reaches of the Fox River, though by gentlemen sportsmen only. Market hunters do not care for this kind of shooting. It calls for a waste of too much powder and lead. To the market hunter of the West powder and lead are of more worth than rubies. He would not know what to do with the rubies, but he does know what to do with ammunition, and he handles it in masterly fashion.

There are three other ways of killing pin-tails in this neighborhood. They may be shot from a boat, they may be shot from a blind, or they may be shot during their regular morning and evening flights to and from the feeding grounds. It is seldom that wild fowl will roost in a river, and the pin tail, in many places, a rush along stream. It is too much trouble for a duck to keep himself awake in order to stay still, so, almost without exception the fowls fling down to lower halts, but for the most part to some quiet pond in the marsh of the region, miles away from the stream, and there they drowsily roll, crapulous all night long.

A pond thus baited by grease is especially easy. Decoys are placed in the water near the bank, a blind of some sort is made, and shooting at the end of each hour. Market hunters, living out near one of these ponds tell the times of night in this way. Of course, to watch for the frequently recurring flights of pin tails means loss of sleep, and so it does not pay to make the attempt except when there is any such thing as time at all.

A man named Hatcher Howard, from Chicago, one day last year, had all these people laughing and "guying" the pin tail shooters in the vicinity of Fox River. He had come in the morning with a gun of a kind not to be found along the Fox, a single barrel affair, which weighed, so he said, twenty pounds. He had a dog of a breed not to be found along the Fox, a nondescript which he would speak of as "a pointer." He proposed to the dozen men assembled in his honor to bring in game enough for the dinner of the next day and Tuesday night. He knew nothing about his daughter mounted upon the bear, heartbroken and begged to be allowed to return. During his story he broke down and cried like a child. He pointed out his position as a woman with three children, who was compelled to leave the home without money, and crushed by a storm that is more terrible than even his sympathetic friends can realize. Yesterday Troxler applied to Judge Rost for a position as night watchman, and he was accepted for the place. He left this city tonight.

The people of the parish believe that if the facts as given are true, the action of the mob had some excuse, but they condemn the cowardly means adopted to accomplish its ends. Mrs. Laplace, widow of the dead Senator, drove fifteen miles from Laplace to the scene of the crime, accompanied by her children, and this afternoon accompanied the remains to New Orleans. While Senator Laplace owned the Ormond plantation, he spent most of his time at Laplace station, in St. John parish, and only left that point last Sunday.

Largest Peach and Largest Apple.

From the Denver Republican.

The biggest peach in the world is beside the biggest apple in the world at the state house in this city. At least the records show no larger specimens than these, and Mrs. Slutz, secretary of the horticultural society, will let them as record breakers until some one "shows her," although she is not from Missouri. The fruit was grown on a farm in Montezuma county, and until measured yesterday, it was not known that the apple, which attracted so much attention in the recent street fair, was the companion of a record-breaking peach. The latter arrived early last Friday and is now embalmed at the capitol. The apple was displaced yesterday. The peach is of a rich color. It is 4¾ inches in diameter, nearly round, and weighs 21 ounces. The apple is much larger than the peach, but only half an ounce heavier. The apple measures 5 inches through one way, and 4¾ another. It is of the Wolf River variety. The weight is little more than that of the peach, because apples carry less moisture. The moisture in peaches makes them outweigh apples of a corresponding size. This apple was exhibited by J. D. Hall of Cortez, Montezuma county, at the street fair, with a number of other large specimens, but until yesterday it was not measured and weighed. He is also the contributor of the peach.

save a broad unbroken expanse of surface where the hunter is hidden. All that the hunter need do is to keep his head down until the target is fairly within gunshot and any market-hunter is able to do that much. If he were not he would not be a market-hunter; he would be dead from starvation. It is a peculiar knack possessed by these people—a knack that comes only with long practice—that they are able to judge with accuracy the distance of a bird merely by the sound of its wings. The tousled head appears above the rim of the pot only when the quarry is inside of fifty yards distance and certain to be twenty yards nearer before it is able to check or swerve its flight. The true market hunter never shoots at a duck on the water or in the air when it is beyond thirty yards. Indeed the ability to judge distance by a species of intuition is the mark of the good shot, whether he shoot for the market or the tables of his friends.

The man who goes to John Story's little hotel down by the edge of the river these days will see only a lot of bronze-featured men, sitting about the office stove, each with a short pipe between his teeth and maybe a sleeping retriever lying within touch of his foot. They are lawyers, merchants, lawyers and ministers, away from the city for a little while. One may have helped to break the letter corner in wheat, another may have invented a highly explosive shell, another may be one whose knowledge of the law is known from one side of the Union to the other, but the listener will hear them talk only of guns and ducks until bedtime, unless mayhap the conversation has turned for a moment on guns and dogs. If the visitor rises while still the blaze of Story's big hanging oats his plain breakfast by candlelight, he may see a dozen men walking down to the river near by, he will see a dozen or two of forces stills floating away, each in his own dark colored boat, bound up or down the river as the case may be.

Let him stand a little longer and in the east a sun light creeps and he can just see his hand if it is held between his eyes and the sky. A moment later and the eastern wanness broadens. Hark! Through the keen air hums a tremor of wings. It quivers musically and rapidly past. The gunner knows that somewhere within fifty yards of him has spun by a black mass of feel, but he could not see them to save his life. The air seems stirred by the passing and a chill breeze lifts his hair under his hat. It is not a breeze, however. It is the knowledge that the swiftest wild thing in all the world has whirled mysteriously by him. It is growing brighter in the east and the stars are paling. If perchance a long "V" of geese should honk by highly, one might catch a glimmer of them against the sky. Boom! Down the river a half mile away leans into a mad death dive instantly. Boom! Boom! A man unaware at hand sits upright at the pin tails which are not flying bunched as were the geese but are straying into a line possible seventy-five yards in length. If the car is strained one may fancy that he hears the resultant splashes. Those two shots seem to have been the signal for a grand rush on and down the Fox. The air is tremulous with the rushing of the pinions.

Slowly above the far horizon a line of fire shows. It is head daylight now and the watcher on the bank is able to notice the difference in the flights of the wild fowl. As he stands in plain view, his pipe working more furiously than he knows, they bend high as they near him and pass exactly out of gunshot with a knowledge born of instinct. Up and down the surface of the stream scramble the unnoticed, despised water fowl, the coots and dabchicks. Lines of rice which line the shores come the croaking of the water chicken and the short, sharp snarl of the miniature heron. Disturbed by the noise of the guns a blue bittern rises awkwardly from the reeds, drops his long legs behind him, mounts upward in a spiral and, circling well from his awkward neck drops now and then his hoarse, sullen cry of alarm.

It is 8 o'clock by this time and the morning flight is ended. Host Story is sitting in his office with his feet on the stove, burning good leather and waiting for the people to come in and tell what was done. To each of them he will say as the score is handed in:

"Mr. Mr! That's the record, sub, that's the record."

Story is a symposiarch with the prowess of his guests, and it is not his business unduly to exalt the horn of one guest to the prejudice of the horn of another guest. The men come trooping in and will be about the hotel until 10 o'clock. By that time the sun being a little warm, though it is near November, the pin tails will be resting in the rice and the business of walking them up and trying the leaping shot will begin. The hunters have had a sportsmanlike and thoroughly enjoyable time, but perhaps of them all the man who stood on the bank and heard the teal whirl by and watched the mad rush and see the red flash of the first gun while the rice and the reeds shivered in sympathy with the pain and fright of the birds had the most fun.

CHANCES OF FAME NEGLECTED.

A Professional Immortalizer Plies in Vain His Art on Students.

Amid the crowd of students thronging the entrance to Manhattan Field before the Columbia-Princeton football match last week there moved an incongruous figure. It was that of a heavy-set, shabby man with long gray hair, to whose red features a bristly stubble of white beard lent a particularly ferocious appearance. From time to time he would step up to a student and say something in a low tone, endeavoring to detain the young man, but invariably without success. Presently he stepped out of the rush and walked over to two young men who were talking together near the foot of the stairs.

"Beg pardon," he said in jerky accents, addressing the young man nearest him, who had his arm in a sling, "but are you a member of Columbia College?"

"We are discovered, Bill," said the young man to his companion, with a wink. "I believe I am," he replied to the shabby man, "unless the faculty got in some of their dirty work behind my back and fired me while I wasn't looking."

"Ha, ha, ha!" said the man, without, however, any other overpowering symptoms of mirth, and, glancing at the injured arm, he continued: "Perhaps you play football?"

"If you're Sherlock Holmes," responded the student, "this disguise of yours is the best yet."

"My name's Jones," said the man, "and I represent a Boston clipping bureau."

"Not hair-clipping, I trust," put in the second student, with a glance at the unkempt and flowing locks of the stranger.

"Press clipping, sir," said Mr. Jones. "For a very moderate price we undertake to furnish you with all newspaper articles about your college, celebrating its glories and victories, telling its progress, and thus keeping you apprised of all that is going on. Let me show you our catalogue of prices."

"Clip yourself, you wouldn't," said the student with the injured arm, politely. "I don't feel very strung to-day and sudden excitement, my doctor tells me, is bad."

"Perhaps you'd like to subscribe for our clippings," said Jones to the other youth.

"I'd like to, but the fact is," he replied, with a modest simper, "that I'm so busy, taking all the prizes that are put up for school and college and good college men, that I get time to do any reading."

"Blast your impudence! Did you leave the office paper mention about yourself," said Mr. Jones eagerly.

"Don't do it," put in the football player. "It might make him conceited. If you'll find me a team fit to play against I'll guarantee any prize coming to Columbia. Let's make that fair."

"There was a gleam of distrust in the eye of the eye as he looked from one student to the other, but he returned to the charge.

Another thing we do is to write up the career of football men."

Each students took off their hats and bowed politely.

"If you gentlemen, either of you, would like to have the history of your father written, well could do that, too."

"I thought you meant me," broke in the football man. "However, you can write up just where I live. If you'll collect all that has been written about the old man and send it on long distance by express, I'll give you a fair price per out."

"Which whom do you mean," stuttered the agent, "his father or his mother?"

"Get off the earth," responded the student, looking him straight in the eyes.

The other student here made an unsuccessful attempt to swallow his coat sleeve and almost strangled.

"Cleveland," repeated Mr. Jones. "Press clippings? I didn't know he had a son old enough to be in college."

"Oh, he isn't old enough," interposed the other student, who had recovered from his att