

TO RAISE MORE TERRAPIN.

PLANS FOR INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF THE CHERISHED DIAMOND-BACK TURTLE.

Crisfield, Md., Feb. 19.—This little town, built on oyster shells, is the seat of the terrapin trade of the Chesapeake and the home of State Fish Commissioner James C. Tawes, who is preparing to put in operation a plan for restoring the supply of the toothsome diamond-back. He is confident that the terrapin can be propagated with ease and surprising cheapness, and that with the aid of the State the supply may easily be maintained. The cause of the rapid decline in the quantity of terrapin is considered by the natives to be due to the destruction of the terrapin eggs. These are laid in high, sandy places, and scores of people patrol the sandy beaches daily in the season in search of them. They carry them off to be eaten as table luxuries, just as hens' eggs are. They are very rich and delicious. Captain Tawes proposes, if he receives a sufficient appropriation to justify it, to inclose a number of females in a State pound or pounds, and to hatch out young ones from the eggs. Terrapin begin laying about the middle of May, and the eggs hatch in about thirty days. The female terrapin scratches a hole in the sand, deposits her eggs, from thirteen to nineteen, in it, and then covers them up and allows the heat of the sun on the sand to hatch them.

They are not much bigger when hatched than a man's thumbnail, and are as soft as dough. They crawl around in a lively way and begin to hunt for their food, which consists of small fish, crabs, etc. In the first summer they are quite small, and about November 1 they go into their winter quarters. These consist of soft mud holes in the marsh, or on the bottom of some stream. Here they sleep until about the middle of April or later, and when they come out they are about four inches in breadth. The next year they have increased to six inches, and the third to seven inches. Mr. Tawes thinks that there are several varieties on the coast, but that in some of the Southern States they have precisely the same variety as in Maryland, the only difference being that in this State the period of hibernating is longer than it is further South.

THE TERRAPIN SLEEPS WITH PROFIT.

It is undoubtedly while the terrapin slumbers in the mud that he acquires the peculiar qualities for which he is loved by the epicure. The terrapin sleeps night and day for six to seven months of the year, and takes his night naps regularly during the rest of the time.

Commissioner Tawes is of the opinion that he could make a decided impression upon the terrapin supply in a short time. He would do this, not because the terrapin is a luxury, but because it used to be and can again become a source of great profit to those who catch it upon the great marshes of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

A. T. Lavallette, of this place, has an immense terrapin pound, which is securely fenced in, so as to prevent the escape of the high-priced inmates. He has at present about ten thousand terrapin, most of which, however, are now in the winter's sleep, not in the pound, but in a big cellar. This is kept dark and above the freezing-point, but not too warm. The dealers here have an immense trade in terrapin in Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New-York. They received one order for \$3,000 worth of terrapin on the occasion of the visit of Li-Hung-Chang to New-York, and they supplied the terrapin for the Bradley-Martin ball. They also make large shipments to the West.

The terrapin shippers are opposed to the bill now pending in the Legislature. By its provisions the catching of diamond-back terrapin between April 1 and November 1 is prohibited, under a penalty of \$10 for every terrapin caught, trapped or killed. At no time shall the terrapin caught measure less than five inches on the under shell. No person shall have in his possession, expose for sale or buy any of the aforesaid fish during the closed season.

CRITICISM OF THE BILL.

George Rigg, another large dealer who has a pound containing between eight thousand and ten thousand terrapin, says:

"The bill will have the tendency to destroy our business and throw the trade of Maryland dealers into the hands of Virginians, while at the same time it will retard instead of promoting the propagation of terrapin. The terrapins will be caught just the same, and instead of being sold to legitimate dealers, who would place them in pounds where they might grow and fatten, they will be kept in barrels and boxes until the season opens, when they will be placed upon the market in a bad condition. If the catchers do not desire to hold them for the winter, they have only to cross the line into Virginia, where there are two dealers on Deep Creek, Accomac County, ready to purchase all the terrapin they can get. It would be necessary to have the same law passed by the Legislatures of Virginia and North Carolina in order to do justice to the dealers in Maryland.

"There is a great misapprehension among the majority of people as to the actual age of a terrapin which measures eight inches on the under shell. Our firm was greatly mistaken in the same fact when we started to raise terrapins from eggs. We have reached the conclusion from actual experience that an eight-inch terrapin must be about fifty years old. If terrapin would grow about an inch every year, there would be a fortune in raising them. Their growth for the first three or four years is rapid, but after that it is almost imperceptible from year to year. We have been at a great deal of

expense in fitting up our pound, and have endeavored to develop the terrapin industry. The law also provides that the destruction of diamond-back terrapin eggs is absolutely prohibited, the penalty for violating this provision being not less than \$25 nor more than \$100 for each offence. It seems to us that the best way to prohibit the destruction of terrapin eggs is for the State to offer a good price for them and let them be hatched out in the hatcheries of the State. After the young terrapin have reached a certain age they can be liberated without danger of their being destroyed. There would be no inducement to catchers to use the eggs for food if they were assured of a good price from the Fish Commissioners."

CURLY-HEADED JURORS.

From The New-Orleans Times-Democrat.

It is not generally known that there is a well-defined prejudice against curly-haired men when it comes to choosing a jury to try criminal cases. The prejudice, when it is manifested, comes from the defence. When asked to explain the objection to curly-haired men, a prominent practitioner yesterday said: "When I was just starting my legal mentor inculcated that idea in me. He said that curly-headed men had most invariably been the pampered darlings of their parents, and in their youth had been so used to having their own way that they had come to believe that everybody on earth was wrong except themselves. In this way the seeds of opposition were sown, and when they grew older they made it a point to disagree with everybody and everything. If everybody else on the jury votes for acquittal, they vote for conviction, as a matter of course. They live on combat, and are as stubborn as the days are

long. A curly-haired man never gets on the jury when I am defending a man if I can see him in time."

HIRED WEBSTER FOR A WEEK.

From The Boston Herald.

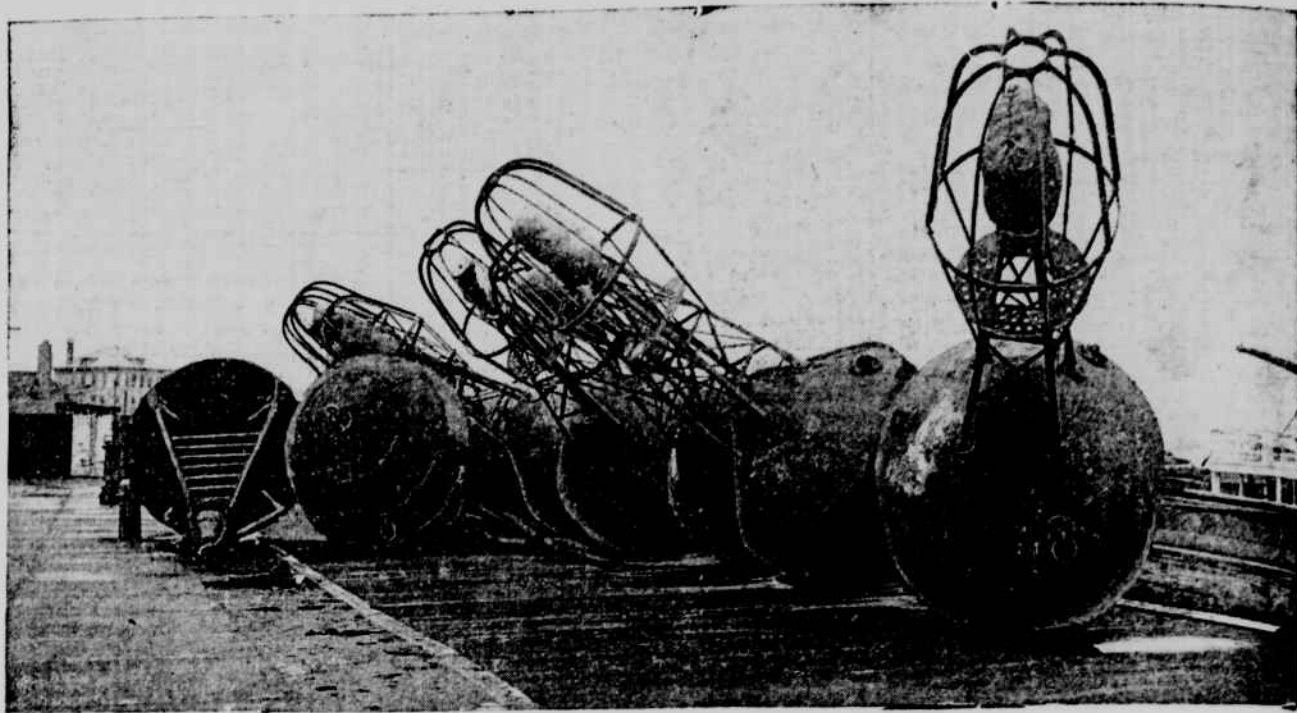
Of course, Webster was in demand by those who could afford to pay for his services. A sharp Nantucket man is said to have got the better of the great defender of the Constitution in an amusing way, however. He had a small case which was to be tried at Nantucket, one week in June, and he posted to Webster's office in great haste. It was a contest with a neighbor over a matter of considerable local interest, and his pride as a litigant was at stake. He told Webster the particulars, and asked what he would charge to conduct the case.

"Why," said Webster, "you can't afford to hire me. I should have to stay down there the whole week, and my fee would be more than the whole case is worth. I couldn't go down there for less than \$1,000. I could try every case on the docket as well as one, and it wouldn't cost any more, for one case would take my time for the entire week, anyway."

"All right, Mr. Webster, quickly responded the Nantucketer. "Here's your \$1,000. You come down, and I'll fix it so you can try every case."

Webster was so amused over this proposition that he kept his word. He spent the entire week in Nantucket, and appeared on one side or the other in every case that came up for hearing. The shrewd Nantucketer hired Daniel out to all his friends who were in litigation, and received in return about \$1,500, so that he got Webster's services for nothing, and made a good profit to boot.

If that man was alive in these days of trusts and syndicates he would probably be at the head of a legal trust, controlling the services of all the big lawyers of the country.



BELL-BUOYS IN WINTER QUARTERS AT TOMPKINSVILLE, STATEN ISLAND.

LOOKING OUT FOR JACK.

UNCLE SAM'S CARE OF THE BUOYS AND HARBOR LIGHTS.

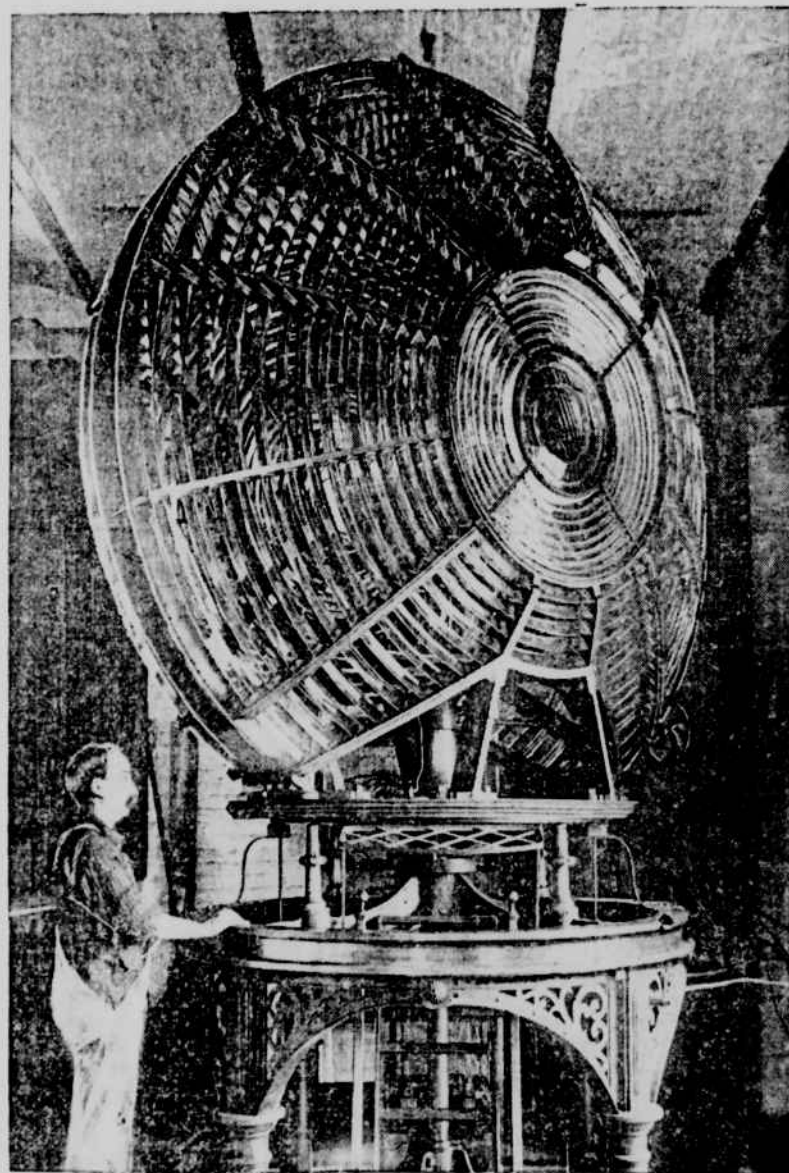
THE GIANT LENS TO BE PUT IN POSITION AT NAVESINK HIGHLANDS—BUOYS HAULED OUT FOR REPAIRS AT TOMPKINSVILLE.

The buoys that mark the channel approaching New-York Harbor and those placed inside the harbor to mark the anchorage grounds of vessels that are in the harbor seem to the average person to be small affairs. All that a passenger on the deck of a vessel sees is the top of one of these buoys bobbing up and down with the tide. He probably does not realize that they are of great size, or that they have to be watched and cared for with the utmost vigilance. The average landsman sees the buoys anchored at their various stations, and as a rule has the impression that these warnings to mariners, once placed, remain in their positions for years. A visit to the general depot of the lighthouse establishment at Tompkinsville, Staten Island, would be a revelation to the average individual who has seen the buoys as they were stationed, but never followed up their history or construction. The station at Tompkinsville not only is the headquarters of the inspector of the Third Lighthouse District, but is also the supply station for all the other districts. Here the repairs are made on all the buoys, and here the supplies are kept for the various lighthouses on the Atlantic coast. The Third District is under the charge of Commander W. M. Folger. It extends from Elisha Ledge, off Warren Point, R. I., to a point on the coast of New-Jersey opposite Shrewsbury Rocks, and includes the ledge and the rocks. It embraces all aids to navigation on the coasts of Rhode Island, Connecticut, New-York and New-Jersey northward of the point opposite Shrewsbury Rocks, Long Island Sound and Lakes Champlain and Memphremagog.

The local work of the inspector, as confined to New-York Harbor and its approaches, includes outside of the numerous lightships and light-houses, over two hundred buoys, which must be watched most carefully. The result of the shifting of these buoys may prove disastrous to the vessels coming in or leaving this port. The slightest change in the location of even one of the two hundred buoys may mean the greatest inconvenience to shipping interests. This was shown in a marked way when the steamers La Bretagne and Kaiser Wilhelm II went aground recently in Gedney Channel as a result of the shifting of the buoys located there. This shifting was the result of the flow of ice down the Hudson, which disabled the buoys. Ice is considered the greatest enemy that the Lighthouse Department has to deal with. Vessels may come in collision with the buoys and displace them, but this fact is at once communicated to the department at Tompkinsville and the buoy is soon placed in its original position; but when ice comes down and gathers around the buoys, not only one, but many, are displaced. A fortune awaits the person who can invent an iron buoy that will remain in position and withstand the attacks of the ice. Several experiments have been made, but all have proved failures.

The only thing the department can do is to take up each winter the iron buoys that are placed in New-York Harbor and substitute spar or wooden buoys. This is done every season in this district, and as a result the station at Tompkinsville now presents a picturesque sight with the iron buoys scattered about the yards. The bell, can, nun, whistling and gas buoys are stowed side by side. Some are on the wharf, others in the yard, and still others are in the various shops being overhauled ready to be placed in position as soon as all danger from ice is over.

The plant where these buoys are stored includes, in addition to the necessary storehouse and offices, a complete machine shop, a black



THE NEW LIGHTNING LENS LIGHT AT TOMPKINSVILLE.