

THE GREAT TROUT ANGLERS OF POTOMAC LIFE

Leaders and Members of Both Houses of Congress Describe Their Proudest Moments—Minority Leader Mann and the Red Flannel Bait—Big Fish Kicked in Stomach Disgorges Smaller One Needed for Bait—The Judge and His Flounce of Flopping Fish Is Mistaken for a Merman—Where Trout Fishing Is So Good It Is Bad—Shooting Trout With a Rifle and Catching Them Out of Water—Two Senators Who Are Master Trout Anglers—How Frye Proved His Laurels—A Night Battle With a Giant Swordfish—Two 180-Pounders Landed in One.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 12.—In the mixed crew of our ship of state are men not a few of whom heartily agree with Isaac Walton that angling is "like virtue, a reward to itself," that "it is an art worthy the knowledge and practice of a wise man," and that "God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation."

On the House side of Congress, James R. Mann, of Illinois, the new floor leader of the Republicans, is an angler with a wondrous record, as you must agree after perusing the following account of his proudest adventure with the rod. He will let his good friend Each tell it.—Representative James J. Each, of Wisconsin, and of Echo-Townsend railway bill fame.

"As members of the committee on interstate and foreign commerce," Mr. Each told me yesterday, "Mr. Mann, former Representative Ryan, of Buffalo, and myself were making an inspection of the lighthouses of the great lakes, in August, 1904."

"In the course of our tour we investigated the Standard Rock lighthouse, located 40 miles out in Lake Superior on a submerged copper reef. We were informed that owing to the distance from the nearest shore little fishing had been done in these waters and that as a result the lake trout fishing was good. Arriving at the Standard Rock lighthouse, we secured tackle consisting of trolling lines with spoon hooks and baited with minnows. We fished the reef for a period of four hours, during which time we caught a total of 754 pounds of lake trout, the largest weighing 74 pounds."

Kicked Trout and Got Bait.

"When we started to fish we had no bait. The lighthouse-keeper supplied us with a bit of red flannel, and I had the good fortune of catching the first large lake trout with this bait. One of the lighthouse-keepers after landing him in the boat with a gaff, kicked the fish in the stomach and it disgorged a lake herring which it had recently swallowed. With the herring for bait our success became more pronounced and each boat crew enjoyed

the greatest sport. The fish were taken to Marquette, Mich., and turned over to the crew of the lighthouse tender. Half of the catch was sold at Marquette and the remainder brought back to Chicago.

"I never had such an experience in fishing before and do not expect ever to duplicate it."

Two great angling cronies of the House side are Swager Sharley, of Kentucky, and Judge William C. Houston, of Tennessee, who, on any day that their body skips a session, may now be seen upon the upper Potomac, in patient pursuit of perch and bass.

Cut Rods in Capitol Grounds.

While rambling through the Capitol grounds and planning one of their week-end excursions, these two members of the honorable brotherhood some time ago came upon a little grove of bamboo, which Superintendent Woods had planted upon the edge of the park from cuttings sent over from China.

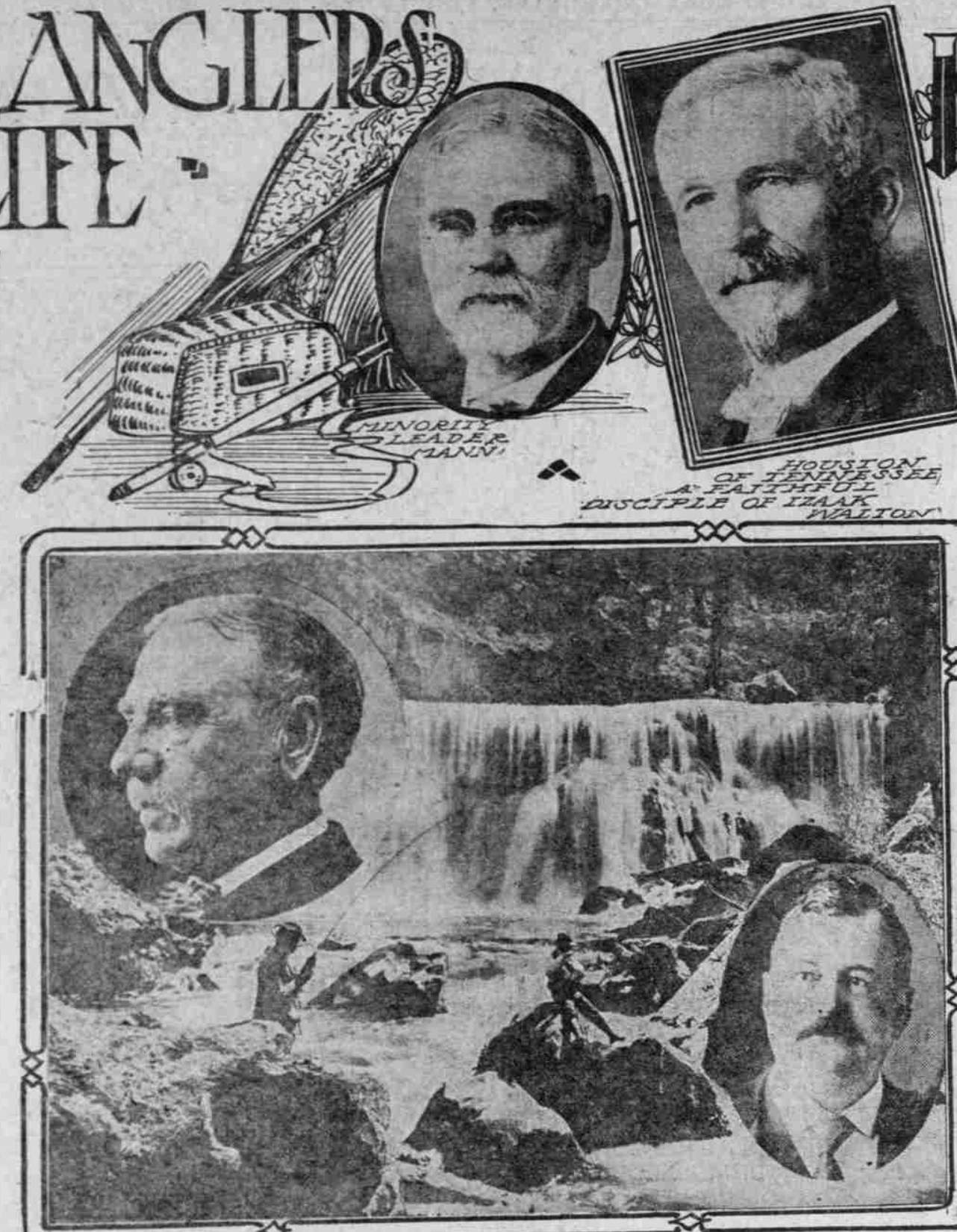
Without ceremony the two fishermen fell to and each cut for himself a straight and light 16-foot rod as ever wielded by a Waltonian disciple, and thus armed, proceeded next day up the river.

"I agree with Henshall that the small-mouth black bass is, 'inch for inch and pound for pound, the gamest fish that swims,'" Representative Sharley told me the other day. He belongs to the Kamp Kaintuck, which includes the elocut among Louisville's fishermen, and he owns a cabin up on the profligate base waters of Magnetawan, Ontario.

Hung Fish to His Shirt.

A favorite fishing anecdote of the other member of this congenial pair, Representative Houston—as it is to do with a certain judge in Tennessee, and as it is told at that jurist's expense, Mr. Houston—with the true southern sever, will not mention that gentleman's name.

One day he and the judge had traveled some 15 miles in a futile search of trout. The judge, who was a good fisherman, was in the boat with a beautiful stream, which gave good promise for the "sport of kings." The right place could not be reached, however, without considerable dragging, and as the judge was not equipped



GREAT TROUT ANGLERS OF THE SENATE
JAMES R. MANN (ON LEFT) AND WILLIAM C. HOUSTON (ON RIGHT) ARE BOTH MAJOR LEADERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

with high boots he stripped himself of all apparel save his upper nether garment and thus arrayed he sallied forth with rod and reel.

Wading off to some distance from Mr. Houston, he soon struck a hole filled with the species of his choice, but after having landed the first fish he awoke to the terrible realization that he had neglected to bring his basket. The only receptacle he had with him was his little minnow bucket.

Here he was in midstream with a wondrous fish. He could not lay it down. He would not throw it back into the water. Yet as long as he held it, flopping in his hands, he could not go on with the sport. So what was he to do?

Well, he happened to be a gentleman of wondrous resource, and taking up his garment he tore the lower edge so

that there extended a short ribbon of fabric which he tied through the gills of the trout, which dangled against his bare knee. And soon after he had cast again he had another strike and landed his fish, which was similarly tied against the opposite knee.

The judge had struck a paradise. He hauled in trout after trout, all strung in the same ingenious fashion, until his simple garment was adorned by a varicolored, vibrating fringe.

Mistaken for a Merman.

Small wonder, then, that Mr. Houston, on suddenly rounding a curve and coming upon the absorbed jurist, from the rear, thought he had penetrated into the lair of some merman of old, for the piscatorial overalls, with ends now dipping below the water's surface, suggested that its wearer was

adorned with a great, undulating, scaly tail, upon which he was balancing himself while plying his rod. Indeed, had the Congressman been a gentleman of bibulous habits he would have had reason to mistrust his eyes.

But the best part of the joke he had on the judge was this: That zealous angler had been so absorbed with the sport that he was unmindful of the fact that the fish, fished his bare legs whenever they flapped. On his way home he believed he had prickly heat, and that night he was sure that jiggers had bored into his skin, and the next morning he sent for the doctor.

The House has no better fisherman than Halvor Steenerson of Minnesota.

"My angling began," he tells me, "when I was a small lad, just able to walk, and when I followed an elder



EX-REP STEENERSON OF MINNESOTA, AN ADEPT AT TROUT FISHING.



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brother along a little trout stream in Southeastern Minnesota. Yes, the happiest days of my life have been spent in that pastime.

"Fly fishing for mountain or brook trout is, to my notion, the best and healthiest sport, offering sufficient and varied exercise, as well as never flagging interest."

"Some of the best trout fishing in the world is to be had on the streams flowing into both the north and south shore of Lake Superior, and one of my favorite angling haunts has been

Flathead River, near Lake McDonald in Montana—now included in Glacier Park.

"In the Flathead I have caught with a four and one-half rod and automatic reel, four-pound trout that were as gamey fish, and that afforded as much sport as any I ever hooked."

"My record on some of my fishing trips has been good, I won't deny, but owing to the proverbial skepticism prevalent I do not care to go into details. Besides, my wife was with me

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THE ADVENTURES OF LIAS—A TALE OF THE PHILIPPINES

It was an old-time house, of Roman cement, heavy timbered, the roof, standing close beside the city wall. Some Spanish grandee had built it a century before. It had withstood typhoon and tornado, earthquake and warfare, had seen Spain's power wane, and a new people come to rule in old Manila. Twenty years before Lias' adventures began the great mahogany roof-beams were overhauled, several of the old ones were strengthened, and two new ones put in, and a new house—snake was established in the attic, to look after the rats.

The attic had not been opened since that day. For 20 years Lias had lived alone in his gloom; there were always rats. It was all that one python could do, without working overtime and in a few hours, to keep them decently in check. Now and then a pigeon from the square, seeking a nesting-place, came in, far up the ridge, where a tile was missing, but no pigeon ever went out. The frequent rain brought fresh water along the eaves, and the gutters, Lias' needs were few, his principles, like the old stoic's, were brief and fundamental. He had contentment, with ease and exercise and he grew big and muscular.

But there came a day full of low rumblings and underground mutterings, of heat so intense that Lias lay and panted beneath the thick, cool roof of his attic. Then, in a moment, the whole earth seemed to rock and the air was full of strange sounds, the rending of walls, the breaking of tiles, the clatter and crash of bricks and stones as buildings shook and chimneys and loose cornices went smashing down into the streets.

Lias' attic shook with the others. There was a cracking sound above him, followed by the rattle of broken tiles, and, in one corner, a sudden blinding glare of something which Lias had not seen in 20 years—direct sunlight. He could not bear it, but hid his head among his own great coils and lay motionless for long, long after the commotion subsided.

The earthquake was severe, lasting for nearly half a minute, but it did comparatively little harm after all. When evening came Lias recovered from his fright and began his hunting. Reaching across the floor after a fleecing rat, he found himself close beside an opening where he remembered none. Out beyond it was something which dimly stirred him to recollection of another life than this in the attic. A mighty ylang-ylang tree grew near the house. It was in full bloom and its wonderful fragrance filled the air. It was all aglow when Lias looked out at it, for thousands of fireflies, like little electric lamps, were flitting about its blossoms.

As the python's eyes grew wonted to

the strange light, he saw something hanging from a branch which stretched out toward the house. The object was very near the new opening, and he regarded it for an instant; then his head shot forward; there was a quick, fierce dart, a little streak of fright and pain, and Lias drew back to swallow the bat he had caught.

How good it tasted, and there was more of the same sort to be had; he could see numberless bats flying about, or hanging from the branches. Here was something worth while, and he presently Lias' 17½ feet of length glided noiselessly out over the roof-gutter into the tree.

How good it must have felt to coil and twist that fragrant arbor, after 20 years of attic beams and ceiling boards! The big snake climbed and writhed from limb to limb, frightening birds and bats into flight, for hour after hour. At last, weary and well fed, he hitched himself back toward his retreat, to find it cut off. In coming out the balance of a loosened tile, jarring it down into the opening which had afforded him exit, and Lias was barred from his attic.

Back he crawled to the other side of the tree and out upon a great branch which extended over the narrow driveway and leaned against the city wall. The rank, lush growth of centuries covered the broad top of the wall, and the python glided out across it. He was in and out among the curtains and old canons which had once guarded the river's mouth, and dropping down the vine-covered facade of the inner gate, he crawled his length out upon the main street, and he was making for the right bank of the Pasig.

When Lias lay between the two big pillars, Homer, Lias' school was at Santa Ana, an outlying suburb far up the river, a hotbed of rebellion and lawlessness. He was the more interested, therefore, to note the thousands of Chinese, Hindus and Ceylonese, Chinamen and Japs, Turks, Russians, Germans, from the foreign ships in harbor, American officers, naval and military, private soldiers and sailors, swarmed back and forth over the thoroughfare. Everywhere in the concourse were natives, in carriages and on foot; huge carabaoes lumbered by, rubbing sides in the crowd with little native ponies and sleek, long-haired Army mules. It was for the most part a masculine throng, but there were women, as well, native and American, in their little pony carriages, driving down to the shopping quarter.

Homer leaned against the rail he overheard a bit of conversation between two Civil Service men, caught in a temporary blockade of the traffic. "They suspect that a big lot of opium was smuggled in somewhere up the coast," by Illocos Norte. They know until he's for the most part a masculine throng, but there were women, as well, native and American, in their little pony carriages, driving down to the shopping quarter.

"No; not yet. There are two or three big seniores under suspicion, but the Chief doesn't dare move until he's got the latter was broken and the two passed on. Homer heard no more, and the passing phrase or two would not have remained in his mind but for what happened five minutes later. Picking his way across the road, through a tangle of vehicles and foot-passengers, he presently saw a slim white-clad Filipino gentleman coming toward him under a white umbrella lined with green.

"Good day, Senator Lansang," the newcomer said, in a cheerful English, learned at a boys' boarding school in Hongkong, and spoken proudly now.

"Good morning," Homer answered, briefly. He did not know the senator, but he was the richest and most cultured native in the barrio where Lansang lived and taught. The senator removed his broad-brimmed hat, bowed, and then he held his umbrella over Lansang's head.

"It is hot; is it not, senator?" he asked, affably.

"Permit me the honor," and he held the green-lined shade still lower, shutting out not only the glaring sunlight, but the gaze of chance passers.

"I love the American teachers," he said, enthusiastically, "but tell me, Senator Professor, why do so many work so hard at extra tasks, teaching, for instance all the day, and again at evening-time?"

"I suppose some do it because they like to," the American said, shortly. The senator's manner was distasteful to him. "And I suppose," he added, "that all of them need the money. Living isn't easy in Manila."

Senator Felipe sighed.

"That is true," he murmured, pressing the teacher's arm more firmly. "I have feared that the brave teachers

must often suffer inconvenience. Therefore it is that I rejoice to think I may, perhaps, increase the earnings of such teachers as might care—" he hesitated, looking sidelong at Homer.

"Money's a good thing to have," Lansang said, at last.

"I could put each of all by way of making an addition to teaching salary," the Filipino went on.

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THERE CAME A REPORT AND A FLASH FROM THE WINDOW ABOVE.