

ATTACKED BY SHARKS

Whale's Terrific Battle With a School of Thrashers.

AWESOME INSPIRING CONTEST.

Unequal Fight Was Ended by the Death of the Courageous Mammal, Who Was Torn to Shreds by Her Ferocious Assailants.

Early one morning while engaged in building new quarters for the light-house keeper at Breakers island, near Westport, Western Australia, the contractor and his men noticed a bull whale, with a cow and calf, passing the island some distance off. They watched them with interest for a while, noting the immense size of the two parents and the methodical regularity with which columns of water rose from their blowholes and then resumed their labors.

An hour or so later—about 9 o'clock, to be exact—the men were startled by an extraordinary noise, apparently coming from the eastern end of the island, a noise unlike anything they had ever heard before. Dropping their tools and staring toward the east, they beheld such a sight as it falls to the lot of few people to witness. There, not 500 yards from the shore, was being waged a battle to the death—a fight between the great cow whale, previously seen and a school of thrasher sharks. The calf was swimming about distractedly, but the old bull had disappeared, having basely deserted his family at the first approach of danger.

The sharks, as they were acting in accordance with some preconcerted plan, had completely surrounded the two whales and, apparently realizing that nothing was to be feared from the calf, concentrated all their efforts upon the cow. Again and again they charged in upon her, their jaws snapping, tearing at her mighty sides until the sea was red with blood. Meanwhile the cow lashed her tail furiously, hurling up sheets of reddened water and occasionally crashing down with terrific force upon one of her voracious opponents. Maddened with pain and rage, she dashed this way and that, but the sharks hung to her side with a persistence and ferocity that made the fascinated onlookers shudder. Now and again the wildly lashing tail would catch one of the assailants, driving it beneath the waves—no doubt killed or disabled—but the remainder rushed in unhesitatingly, tearing viciously at the mammal's bleeding flanks or hitting her with the force of battering rams.

Presently the spellbound spectators realized two facts—first, that the calf had disappeared in the melee and, second, that the tortured whale was undoubtedly becoming weaker. It was obvious that the unequal struggle could have only one ending. Still, however, she fought on doggedly, winning admiration and sympathy by her exhibition of hopeless courage. Altering her tactics, by a supreme effort she heaved her whole great bulk clear of the water for a moment, and the fascinated onlookers beheld the sharks hanging from various parts of her gleaming body by their serrated teeth. Then down she went again with a crash like thunder, and for an instant the sea and sharks were buried amid masses of foam, heavily colored with the blood of the mammal's lifeblood. Rising again, she essayed another charge of defiance, striking for the clinging sharks against their edges. But the sharks were equal to the occasion. Those on the outside maintained their grip, and the others dived under their backs and charged her anew, tearing at the whale's side in an ecstasy of fighting that was bloodcurdling to witness.

More and more feeble grew the whale's struggles, and at last, to the relief of the spectators, for the whale's fight had been terrible to behold, the great body turned over and beneath the red tinted water, the unequal battle was over, having lasted from 9 o'clock until noon, as was supposed a contest as man was ever privileged to witness. The men went back to their work greatly impressed by the unique spectacle, and expressions of sympathy for the whale were heard on every side.

Forty-eight hours afterward the whale's body, which had in the meantime become distended with gas, rose to the surface and exploded with a bang like a miniature powder magazine, causing the startled people to rush to the shore to discover what had happened. On examination of the remains it was discovered that every atom of the outer flesh of the whale had been torn off by the sharks, who had, doubtless gone off to repeat their feast upon some other hapless leviathan. Doctor Pitt-Kethley in St. Louis.

What He Said.

When the witness in a case in a court was asked, "Did you sell your father a horse?" "No, sir," "Did your father sell Major Studdert a horse?" "No, sir," "Did you sell him a horse?" "No, sir," "Well, then, did any member of your family sell Major Studdert any?" "Yes, sir," "Who did, then?" "My father," "And what did you sell him?" "I sold him a mare," "Did the counsel set down, and the court agreed."

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A PAIR OF GLOVES.

The Impudent Store People Wouldn't Take Them Back.

Mrs. Pinkerton's first question was about the gloves.

"Did you exchange them?" she asked.

"No," said Pinkerton, "I didn't."

"There," she complained, "I might have known you would forget it. How careless! I told you the very last thing before you left the house to be sure to attend to it. Really, I don't see how men can be so thoughtless."

"I didn't forget," said Pinkerton, "I tried to change them, but they wouldn't take the things back."

"Wouldn't take them—back?" she said. "Why not?"

"They said they were soiled."

"Soiled? Well, of all things! If they are they got soiled in their own store. I didn't soil them. I have never had them on my hands. I couldn't get them on. They were half a size too small. They gave me the wrong number. Why didn't you tell them so?"

"I did."

"Whom did you tell?"

"The clerk and the floorwalker and everybody who would listen to me."

"And what did they say?"

"They laughed."

"The impudent creatures! I'll never buy a cent's worth in that store again, you see if I do."

"That's just what I said," Pinkerton put in. "I said you never would."

"And what did they say to that?"

"They laughed again."

"Well, that settles it. I never will buy anything there now. Where are the gloves?"

"In my pocket."

"Let me have them, please. Soiled, indeed! I'll see if they are."

Mrs. Pinkerton unwrapped the package. As she took out the gloves she was washed slightly.

"Well," she said.

"Well?" echoed Pinkerton. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing much," she said, "only this is an old pair of gloves. I cleaned them last week with gasoline. I made a mistake and sent them back instead of the pair I bought yesterday."—New York Herald.

THE BLACK BASS.

Mysterious Habits of the Fish That Puzzle the Naturalist.

Why the black bass bites on one day and refuses every bait the next; why he takes helgramites and only helgramites on Monday, grasshoppers on Tuesday and frogs on Wednesday; why he bites only on dark days for a fortnight and then shifts his biting humor to days bright and breezy; why you find him today on sandy bottom and tomorrow on mud and the day after on the rocks, are baffling traits of the bass that relate merely to his sporting relations with the angler. But there are other mysteries that puzzle the naturalist and bear on the organic life of the fish.

Up in Maine are two bass rivers not far apart. In one the fish run often to four, even to five, pounds; in the other rarely above a pound and a half. In one of the largest lakes of New Hampshire, the writer's score for a whole season once ran up to 338 fish. Food was evidently abundant, for the bass were "chunky" and the viscera thick with fatty tissues. Yet the post-mortem showed in the stomach, only glutinous, unrecognizable white matter, and the largest bass of the whole season drew the scales at but a pound and three-quarters. What did those bass live on, and why didn't they grow bigger? Again, in the uplands of Connecticut are two large lakes some eight miles apart. In the one bass are often caught in winter ice fishing; in the other lake almost never in winter, though in its open summer waters bass fishing is the better. Remembering that the bass are supposed to hibernates and in fairly deep waters, would not that fact argue in the late season darker outward hues and deeper bronzes? Yet the head of a large bass hatchery has observed a silvery change of the bass at the approach of winter when his habit and habitat would imply the exact reverse. Such are a few of the anatomical enigmas of the black bass that make him and his paradoxes an interesting study for that open minded angler who blends the naturalist with the sportsman.—Collier's Weekly.

Elihu Yale's Grave.

Elihu Yale, from whom the college in New Haven took its name, sleeps in the graveyard at Wrexham church, near Chester, England. The following inscription (restored some years ago by the council of Yale) is to be found on one side of his tombstone:

Born in America, in Europe bred, in Africa traveled, in Asia wed. Where long he lived and thrived; in London dead.

Much good, some ill, he did, so hope all's even. And that his soul through mercy's gate to heaven.

—Boston Globe.

In a Bad Way.

A teacher in an elementary school at Graz, Austria, received a letter from a mother who explained that she had been dangerously ill with rheumatism and had kept her little girl at home to nurse her.

A Native Interpretation.

"Tell me," said an inquiring Englishman of an American friend, "what is the significance of the eagle shown on your money?"

"It is an emblem of its swift flight."

The Object.

Rich Uncle Ebenezer—So you are named after me, are you? Small Nephew—Yes; ma said it was too bad, but we needed the money.

THE UMPIRE.

Did You Ever Hear the Fans Cheer Him For His Work?

There is one unique phase connected with the life of the umpire which perhaps has never occurred to most lovers of baseball. You have often been to a theater and seen the hero or heroine—yes, even the villain—win round after round of applause for some excellent bit of acting.

You have been to a football game and heard some bull gladiator cheered to the echo for making a long run that resulted in a touchdown or for a flying tackle that prevented imminent defeat. When some player is injured they convey their sympathy to him by cheering his name.

You have been to a ball game and heard the fans cheer some crack pitcher because in a pinch he fauced some mighty batter. It's just the natural way of the American to show admiration and appreciation.

Rack your brain, think your hardest, recall every game you have ever attended, then see if you can remember a time when the umpire drew applause for his work. Have you ever heard the fans cheer the name of the umpire after he has worked a fifteen inning game which fairly bristled with close and unusual plays and got away without a kick? If you can recall such an incident, just dot it down in your notebook that you were present at a very, very unusual happening.

Do they cheer the umpire's name when he stops a foul tip with his shin or has a swift shoot bounced off his mask? Yes, they do—not. Any injury to the umpire usually gets a round of derisive laughter from the crowd. Generally, if he has been going bad, some leather lunged individual requests that he be killed or chloroformed. Of course there are many people in the stands who sympathize with the umpire. Their sympathy is usually silence. That isn't much balm to his injury or feelings.

Applause would sound so strange to an umpire's ears that he would probably become so thoroughly frightened he would jump the back fence.—Billy Evans in New York Tribune.

THE TELESCOPE.

Galileo's Rude Instrument the First Used in Astronomy.

The first telescope was pointed toward the sky on Jan. 7, 1610, when Galileo first tried his rude instrument and was rewarded by discovering some of the moons of Jupiter. No great magnifying power was needed for this, as at least one of the moons is large enough to be seen by the naked eye did not the nearness of the brilliant planet prevent this. Lenses had been known for a long time and were at that time in common use by near-sighted persons.

The name of the real discoverer of the telescope seems to be unknown, but the accepted story now is that two young sons of a Middelburg optician named Lippersley some time between 1605 and 1608, while playing with some lenses, happened to hold two of them at a distance from each other and were surprised and delighted to find that the weather vane on a neighboring tower seemed to come near them when looked at through the two lenses. In April, 1609, a little telescope made in Holland was offered for sale in Paris.

The next month Galileo, then a professor in the university at Padua, heard of this instrument and realized at once its importance in the study of astronomy. From the description of the Dutch instrument he had one made at once, and in August he astounded the people of Venice by showing them from the top of the campanile persons entering the doors of the church at Murano. This spyglass was less than two inches in diameter and magnified three times. From this crude instrument of Galileo to the monster telescopes forty inches in diameter of the present day is the development of only three centuries.—Argonaut.

An Interruption.

Among the primary pupils enrolled in a Baltimore school is the son of a prominent business man of that city, says Harper's Magazine. One afternoon at close of school the youngster sought out his father in his office, to whom he said:

"Dad, I'm getting tired of school. I think I'll quit."

"Why," asked the astonished parent, "what's the matter, Tommy? I thought you were fond of going to school."

"So I am, dad," responded the youngster, suppressing a yawn, "but it breaks up the day so."

His Opening Break.

A congressman had returned to his constituency to deliver a carefully prepared address. The day arrived, and, loosening the first button of his Prince Albert, he uttered his carefully prepared prefatory remarks, and to this day he cannot understand the ripple of laughter which swept over his audience when he uttered his opening sentence, "Before I begin to speak to you I desire to say something." He said it.—Kansas City Star.

On the Way.

"I understand that you owe every thing to your wife," said the tartless relative.

"No," answered Mr. Meekton, "but I will if I don't stop playing bridge with her and her mother."

Her Slip.

He—Do you think if I were to kiss you your dog would bite me? She—Well—er—his never done it to any one before.

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