

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 1899.

## SPORT WITH FLYING FISH

THEY ARE SHOT ON THE WING OFF CALIFORNIA ISLAND.

A Water Sparrow Trained to Retrive Them—The Flight of Flying Fish—Great Tuna That Leap After Them and Catch Them in the Air.

May 20.—'Look out! Look out!' shouted the man at the wheel of the little launch Linda. The two men lying on deck ducked their heads and over the bow went a flying fish at least thirteen inches in length; its wings outspread and locked, its hind wings trembling and its big black eyes staring.

It was a singular sight; but one of the men had no poetry in his soul, for the moment the flyer was a fair distance away he raised a shot-gun and fired, bringing it down whirling and struggling into the water. Immediately a water spaniel sprang over the rail and swam toward the game.

'He won't get it,' said the dog's master, throwing the shell out of the gun. 'There's but one trouble—the game sinks.' And such was the case. The flying fish went to the bottom and disappeared before the dog reached it. The animal swam around in a dazed fashion and finally was hauled aboard.

Flying fish shooting is peculiar to Santa Catalina, where the big California flying fish makes its summer home in the San Clemente channel.

'I have a patent on the sport,' said the man who had the gun, 'but, as I said, it has but one drawback—you can't always get the game. No, I am not in it for my health or pleasure. You see, the tuna season is beginning here. The tuna is particular and wants a flying fish diet; but the trouble is the flying fish don't come in to the bays until it gets a little warmer; so we have to go and get them. Last night they were offering \$5 apiece for flying fish and everybody was out. Some had nets, some went with two lights in the bow of the boat and tried to spear the fish; that works in summer. The flying fish seems sort of dazed when it sees the light and lies perfectly still in the water and can be struck with a spear very easily. Another man rigged up a big sheet on his boat so that the flying fish would strike it and fall in, but it didn't work, so I'm out for some on a new plan. You see, we just steam ahead at full speed, and when a fish rises, frightened, and tries to soar away, why, I let him have it and the dog jumps over and retrieves it if it doesn't sink. Look out! There they go!'

As he spoke two large flyers started out of the water and went bounding away. They did not fly, that was evident; they merely locked their wings and soared. One went to the right and one to the left, about two feet above the surface, and the sportsman picked off one with a shot as neatly as one could wish.

'It's queer sport,' he said, 'and they're a queer fish. See this one. Ten to one it will strike the boat with its eyes wide open.'

Instead of darting away from the boat, a flying fish that had dashed out of the water headed directly for it and was coming on about three feet above the surface. It tipped slightly with the wind, but preserved its balance perfectly, and, with a headlong plunge, struck the cabin and fell into the water, from which it was rescued by one of the men. Presently the rushing boat started two more fish, and the man with the gun picked them off in a manner that elicited applause from the lookers on; but, unfortunately, both fishes were lost, the spaniel reaching one just as it went down.

'Shooting flying fishes requires as much skill as in shooting quails,' said the sportsman. 'They move just as fast and look so much like the water that they are hard to hit. They swim in coveys, just like quails, too, and one of the prettiest sights I ever saw about the California islands was the flight of a covey of flying fishes. I was out after them in a small launch, and as we turned the corner of the island we suddenly struck a heavy west wind. It happened that at that moment a school of tunas came rushing in and chased the flyers into the air. There must have been thirty or forty of them, and as they cleared the water, head to the wind, the gale struck them and carried them high into the air, where they darted away like a flock of insects glistening in the sunlight, gradually falling away before the wind and disappearing from view.'

'How far can a flying fish fly?' asked one of the listeners.

'Well, that's difficult to say. I know that they can soar an eight of a mile, and I'd be willing to say that they often clear over a quarter of a mile under favourable conditions. There has always been a good deal of mystery about the flight of flying fishes, and there are two decided factions among men who ought to know. One side says that the fish flies, that is, flaps its wings; and the other that it merely soars. Now, if you interview the steward of the steamer that runs between San Pedro and the island, he will prove, or try to, that they fly like birds. The steamer is high forward, and one day he saw what he thought was a bird in the air. A moment later it shot through the glass window and landed among his glasses. He will make affidavit that he saw wings going. But if you interview President Jordan of Stanford University, who is an authority on fishes, or any of our local naturalists, he will tell you that flying fish does not fly. Why, just look at it; they come plumb against the side of the boat. Once I was rowing some ladies along shore when I saw two flying fishes coming right for us. One, despite the fact that the lady waved her hands to frighten it, struck her in the back, while the other passed a few inches from my head; in fact I turned to avoid it. Now if the fish could fly, in the proper acceptance of the term, it would avoid obstacles. Why, I have seen them fly upon the beach in numbers. A lady was sitting on the shore at Avalon when a flying fish flew right into her lap, frightening her well, you may sure. Another fish struck a fisherman in the face. This was at night and might have resulted seriously, as a man could easily be stunned by such a blow.'

'No, the fish don't fly. I have watched hundreds of them and spent weeks trying to photograph them. There is a porthole in the Hermosa, and I leaned out of that and held my kodak trying to catch one, but it was almost impossible. But I saw how they fly. You see, all sorts of fish prey on the flying fish, and when the steamer comes along they think it's a big killer perhaps or a tuna, and being slow swimmers they leap out of the water, and they do it in this way: they whirl the tail around and around, and it acts as a screw and sends them out of the water. The tail is lashed with great vigor and that conveys to the body a quivering, wriggling motion that makes the side fins or wings look as though they were being flapped; but it is only for a second. The moment the fish clears the water the wings are seen to be rigid, and they are held that way while the fish shoots away three feet above the surface, like a kite, supported by the rush through the air, and impelled by the momentum received by the action of the tail. They shoot along, say, for 500 feet, then the force of the rush begins to be exhausted and the tail drops—not the head, mind you; just the tip of the tail; and see,' and the speaker picked up the four-pound flyer—'see the lower lobe of the tail. It is longer than the upper. This touches the water first, and the moment it does the tail is twisted furiously, and once more the fish darts away, clearing, perhaps, 300 feet before its tail drops again. This is repeated three or four times, enabling the fish to travel a great distance without returning to the water. The only beating of the wings is caused by the wriggling of the tail. In a word, the flying fish has four parachutes that it fixes—two in front and two behind.'

As the speaker finished a flying fish crossed the bow of the boat followed by a huge fish gleaming like silver, that shot up into the open air like an arrow, struck the flyer, and sent it, whirling like a pin-wheel into the air.

'There's a fish,' exclaimed the man with the gun, as the big creature dropped gracefully back: 'there's the fellow that retrieves the flying fish and rarely misses him. The tuna is the only fish that can catch his prey in the air. You see, he frightens the flying fish into the air and follows it, just beneath the surface, and when the opportunity comes makes a flying leap and sometimes seizes it; again, as now, he hits and kills it, picking it up as it falls in to the water. The tuna is the sharp-eyed fish of the sea. I have seen them following the flying fish. The latter would fly directly over my boat, the tuna would go under it, but the tuna would never lose sight of the flyer, and begged it as it finally fell, exhausted, after its long, soaring flight.'

'It may seem queer for a man to say that he is afraid of a fish, but I have seen the time when the tunas demoralized me. I was on the sage road above the town one day when I noticed a white patch of foam about two miles away. It was a dead calm elsewhere and I knew it was a school of fish; so I hurried down, jumped into a boat and rowed out opposite the entrance to the bay and waited. In a short time I could see the fish. They were big tunas, leaping after a school of flying fish, going into the air by scores eight or more feet at a jump, and covering an area of many acres with a mass of foam. First the flying fish reached me, as demoralized as I thought as I ever saw. Scores were in the air at a time; some struck the boat, others went over it, and I could see dozens huddled beneath it as if for protection, while others again seemed utterly fagged by the long chase and were unable to move very fast. Pretty soon a tuna went into the air five feet away from my skiff, then another, and I saw that if by accident one should strike my boat it would go through it as though through paper and I would be left a half mile or more away from shore. 'I was rather late in making up my mind to retreat, as by this time the tunas were going into the air all around me, the most remarkable sight it was ever my good fortune to see, and I believe that I do not overestimate the facts when I say that they went up a dozen feet in a straight line. Then they would turn and come down like an arrow, and when numbers were in the air at one time you may know it was a great sight. That's what makes the demand for flying fish at the beginning of the season; the tuna fishermen must have them as they are the natural food of the tuna.'

## THE ROMANCE OF COINCIDENCES.

Some Startling Events in the Lives of Great Men.

Few things in life are more surprising than its coincidences, some of which are so startling and improbable as to assume the appearance of fate.

Charles Dickens was dogged throughout his life by the most perplexing coincidences and his death completed one of the most remarkable of them all. On the ninth day of June, 1865, he escaped death by a railway accident as by a miracle; and in commenting on his escape he wrote: 'I can never be much nearer parting company with my readers for ever than I was then, until there shall be written against my life the two words—"the end." These two words were written by death five years later on the same day of the same month.

A more remarkable coincidence still was noted in the death of Mr. Potter, the freetrade champion and friend of Cobden and Bright, who died at the same hour of the same day and month as his wife, who had preceded him by twelve years.

It was a strange coincidence that led to the identification of one of the most skillful burglars of recent years. The criminal had been arrested on suspicion of having committed several daring burglaries in the Midlands, and was lodged in Holloway prison. Although it was clear that the man was a practised burglar, it was found impossible to identify him, and thus to trace his career in crime.

Fate or coincidence, however, did what Scotland Yard was powerless to do. One of the warders of Wormwood Scrubbs, who had served in the Scottish Borderers in India, saw the prisoner, and recognized in him an old soldier comrade named Hely, who had been imprisoned for felony at Calcutta. This clue was followed up, and led to the disclosure of a long list of crimes and convictions.

An almost incredible triple coincidence was noted in France a few years ago. In 1894 the deputy for the Ardennes was a M. Ferry; for Loir et Cher, M. Brisson; and for the Vosges, M. Hugo. In 1793, 101 years earlier, each district had been represented in the Chamber by a man of exactly the same age.

By a happy coincidence the three sons of a Birmingham man, named Howes, all returned home from different parts of the world, unknown to each other, on the same day.

One son, who was in the Cape Mounted Rifles, had started home without his father's knowledge, and, to the latter's intense surprise, met him on his return from business in the evening. Father and son had barely reached their home when a knock at the door heralded a second son, who had unexpectedly come from India; and later in the evening the family circle was made complete by the arrival of a third son from London.

In no case had either the father or sons any suspicion of the strange chance that was bringing them all together from the corners of the earth.

A very touching coincidence recently brought his two long-lost daughters to the death-bed of a man named Nalls. In the Bloomfield Hospital, New Jersey, Dur-

ing the Civil War Nalls had fallen into the hands of the Confederates, and, after a long term of imprisonment, had been sentenced to be shot.

At the last moment he escaped, and for several years wandered about the States in fruitless search for his wife and daughters. He finally settled down at Bloomfield, a broken-hearted man, and lived there for many years, until a serious ice accident took him to the hospital to die.

He had not been in the hospital a day when he recognized in a lady visitor an old Virginian neighbor of his, who knew the whereabouts of his lost daughters. Within a few days the daughters were at his bedside, ministering to the father they had lost for thirty-five years.

It was almost more than a coincidence which brought together, a few months ago two lovers who had been parted for nearly fourteen years. In 1835 Charles Delavre, the son of a wealthy Philadelphian, was engaged to be married to Miss Charlotte Du Bois, and Christmas Day was appointed for the wedding.

A lovers' quarrel, however, estranged the young couple, and a week before the wedding the bride-to-be disappeared and young Delavre, in disgust, emigrated to Australia. Here he prospered, and, having amassed a small fortune, he decided to take a holiday trip to Europe, returning to Australia by Philadelphia, his old home.

On his way to New York, he was pacing the steamer-deck one day, when he stumbled over the feet of a lady who was sitting alone. Apologies and recognition followed; for the lady was his old fiancée, Miss Du Bois, whom chance had thus strangely thrown in his way. The sequel is obvious; and the happy couple thus strangely re-united, are, at the moment of writing, on their way to Australia.

## COULD EARN THEIR LIVING.

Royalties Who Could do it if it Were Necessary.

It is probably some small gratification to the Sovereigns of Europe to know that if by any strange chance they were to lose their crowns and fortunes, many of them would be in a position to earn their own livings quite as well as the majority of their subjects.

Although the Queen of Romania has long passed her half-century, she could still for many years earn a comfortable and sufficient income in a variety of ways. By her beautiful stories and poems she has long taken rank among the writers of established fame, and there would be keen competition among the publishers of Europe for the fruits of her pen.

She is, too, the only one among European Royalties who is a licensed lecturer; and has for some years lectured in the public schools of Roumania. She would make an ideal principal of Girton or Newnham; and if this resource failed, she could still make a living with her hands, as her marvellous collection of dolls, which excited so much admiration at a recent Berlin doll show, amply proved.

The Royal lady who ranks next to 'Carmen Sylva' in natural cleverness is the Czarina's eldest sister, the Grand Duchess Serge of Russia. The Grand Duchess has much of the literary talent of the Queen of Roumania, and has written many charming books under the pen-name of 'Ary Geilaw.' She is also quite the cleverest actress and mimic in Royal circles; and, if rumor be true, she has acquitted herself brilliantly at least once at a Moscow theatre, where she took the part of the leading actress when she was too ill to appear.

Such a distinguished and clever recruit to the stage would command a salary appropriate to her rank.

Queen Margherita of Italy ranks high among clever Royalties. She is reputed to be one of the best linguists in Europe, and to have a very unusual knowledge of the literature of the world.

The Queen of Portugal is, as the world knows, a qualified doctor of medicine, and practises her profession, like the famous oculist, the Duke of Baden, for the benefit of the poor. If circumstances should ever compel her to turn her training to financial account, she would establish a new record in medical incomes.

Time was when the ex-Empress Eugenie might have made a magnificent income as a rival of Worth. In the days when she was mistress of the Tuileries she kept a small army of needlewomen constantly busy in executing her designs in costumes, which were the admiration of all the Courts of Europe.

The Empress Frederick of Germany has few rivals among Royal ladies in the range and degree of her gifts. She is, perhaps, the cleverest musician in a family which has 'music in its blood,' and is equally clever as executant and composer. She is

a skillful sculptor, and has painted pictures which few amateurs can rival.

The Empress is also a scientific gardener, and knows as much about rose culture as even the Dean of Rochester; while she makes quite a small revenue out of the fruit and vegetables grown under her own eye at Friedrichshof.

It is no mere speculation that the Marchioness of Lorne might rank amongst professional sculptors and painters, a position for which both her training and her natural gifts qualify her; while Princesses Christian and Henry of Battenburg are among the cleverest amateur musicians in England.

Like the ex-Empress Eugenie the Princess of Wales has a marked and trained aptitude for millinery and dressmaking, and has nothing to fear in competition with many who make their livings by these arts; while her mother, the late Queen of Denmark, was a painter of sacred subjects of European fame; and her father, in the far off days when a crown was but a dream, proved conclusively that he could support his family by teaching languages.

The Czar of Russia is said to have a small fortune in his sweet tenor voice, and might even now challenge comparison with singers who make good incomes.

King Leopold of Belgium is a born financier, and is said to have made £4,000,000 by one brilliant coup in Suez Canal shares. In spite of rashness, he has all the instincts of a successful speculator, and if it were not for his crown, might find a place among Wall Street or Chapel Court millionaires. The King of Greece is said to be the shrewdest business-man in Royal circles; and it the German Emperor, with his varied gifts as painter, musician, orator and architect, could not make a living, it would certainly not be for want of native ability or confidence in his own powers.

## NEW YORK MAPLE SUGAR.

A Belt in This State Which Surpasses Vermont's Famous Product.

'I have sopped pancakes in the maple syrup, and got toothache from the maple sugar, and stomach ache from the wax pullings of the maple bleins of five States and sixteen counties, all the way from old Vermont to Michigan including Schoharie county, New York,' said a man from that part of the State, 'and I have been ready to stand up and say, and to bet heavy on what I said, that the sun never shone on any land nor quickened it to the production of anything that could even begin to think of being one-half as good as the maple sugar Schoharie county boiled down out of its sap, or the maple syrup that Schoharie county got out of its sugar, or the maple wax that we pulled out of both of 'em. But that was before I got over into Otsego county. When I struck a sugaring-off of Otsego county's first run of sap I had to admit that I had never known before what sap could really be made to give up. But by and by I was domiciled in Delaware county. Then I stood up and declared that I had found out at last what maple sugar actually was. I began to think that whatever of excellence there was in the maple sugar of Schoharie and Otsego counties was due to the circumstance of their contiguity to Delaware county, and I reflected on how fortunate Schoharie and Otsego were to be there.'

'As a matter of fact, now that I am reminded of it by the census we have just taken of this season's yield of maple sugar in those three counties, and found that it isn't far from 1,000,000 pounds, I don't suppose there is any difference at all in the quality of the sugar made in all that peculiar maple belt extending from the Delaware county Catskills on the south through that county, through Schoharie and Otsego and into Cortland county, this State, and embracing Wayne and Susquehanna counties in Pennsylvania. If the sugar makers of that belt would only give the attention to this business and apply to it the systematic methods that have made the products of the Vermont maples world famous, they would soon be as famous as their brethren in Vermont. As it is, their product ranks second in the market to that of the Green Mountain State. Anyhow, a million pounds of maple sugar from a spring's running of sap in three counties isn't so bad. It sort of fills in the chinks in the bank account, and makes us feel good for putting in the corn and 'aters. We're a great nation up Schoharie way.'

## A Perplexed Old Lady's Plaint.

You see, my daughter Harriet is married to one of these homeopath doctors, and my daughter Kate to an allopath. If I call in the homeopath, my allopath son-in-law an' his wife git mad; an' if I call in my allopath son-in-law, my homeopath son-in-law an' his wife git mad; an' if I go ahead an' git well without either o' 'em, then they'll both be mad; an' I don't see but I'd better die outright.