

# The Mystery of the Sea

by Bonnycastle Dale

PHOTOS  
BY THE  
AUTHOR



"WHAT ISH DOSH?"



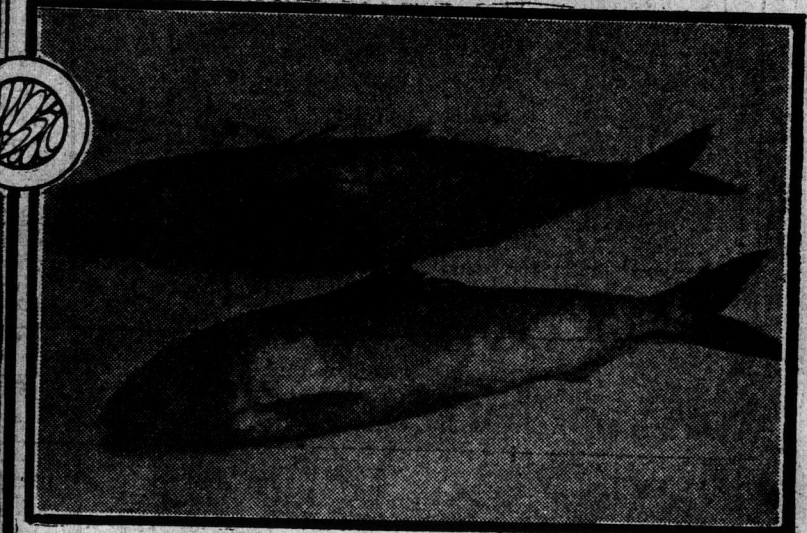
KILLING THE PORPOISE



A LONELY SALMON TERN



A HUGE STURGEON



HORSE  
MAKEREL  
AND  
HAD

How often as we stand beside this mighty heaving mass do we deplore our own ignorance. What knowledge of the mighty deep have we? We do not even know why it is salt, why the density of salt is greater in some parts of the oceans than in others. But if you want to clearly perceive your own lack of knowledge work as I do with a bright-inquisitive lad pouring forth a very Niagara of questions.

Fritz, my assistant, this day was in his most knowledge-seeking mood, and he startled me from my examination of a mermaid's purse by asking "Are all the animals made for man's use?" Here was a pretty poser for a group of professors propounded for a Nature Student on the beach of a lonely suit. I hedged, giving both sides of the question. "The older school of thought that cleaves closely to the good old Book argues that they are. Modern science, in its wide field of discoveries, disputes this. Look at the sea before us. How many things that live therein have Man tamed or domesticated or controlled save by turning a wondrous living organism into a decaying mass. The great herds of sea elephants that disport within the Antarctic are almost unknown to man. The mightiest forms that have existed in the great Sea. Lizard family, huge batwinged things with strong-clawed feet and necks longer than your whole body, things as dreadful as China's painted Dragon, are known only to the human race by some imprints in the clay, or an odd backbone—by the way, Fritz, I saw one of those backbones suspended beside a canoe, and it alone was longer than our whole craft.

What does Man know of the huge invertebrates that inhabit the dark depths below the thousand fathom line. Things so soft that any drag that reaches brings up only crushed portions. There is no doubt a strand of truth woven into the sea-serpent story. Many portions of low forms, ell or snake-like in form, have been taken. Many credible observers have seen some huge thing, unknown to human eyes. How many of the great animals that roam or have roamed the earth has man really subdued? As far as my little research extends I perceive that each order preys on the order below until invisibility is reached. No place for Man in the sequence, save the little we can gather for food. Man does not take one pound in a million from the annual harvest of the seas even though there are a billion and a half men now upon the earth. See the afternoon trade wind that daily starts at a certain regular time. See the beneficent cleansing tide that four times a day washes and purifies a thousand thousand strands, note the mighty vegetables that stand on all these Pacific shores, firs a hundred yards high that catch and gather and hold and distribute the water for a hundred rivers; a thousand streams. See these great Straits of Juan de Fuca, guarded on both sides by mountainous ranges, plainly a volcanic uplift, and remember that they closely resemble in formation the ranges that guard both sides of the Straits of Messina. Did Nature include Man in her plans when she disturbed the formation along these southern straits? Alas, he seemed to be the only animal that was caught in her toils. I think, lad, we take ourselves a great deal too seriously. Everything in the great Creator's plan has its place and no one thing has control of all.

"And what is a Mermaid's Purse?" asked Fritz for the third time. I ceased my lecture and returned to the object I held. "Why that is only a seaweed applied to the egg case of the Skate, but a truly wonderful egg case it is. Just similar to those of some sharks. Shaped so that it may float readily, but so weighted with the egg inside that it floats deeply submerged. The female that gave birth to this school of boats, as we may call them, may be miles distant, flapping her great leathery fins along the bottom of the sea like some huge submarine bird of prey—a fish of prey she truly is. The case drifts along near shore, in the warmer shallows, the heat gradually hatching out the odd shaped, curious looking creature inside. Once the young skate is large enough it forces open the rear hatch, to yet liken it to a boat, the stuffy pliant parchment yields slowly, and soon we have another free skate swimming along.

We were approaching the little guard house of the great salmon trap that extended like a long straggling fence a full half mile from the shore. The two watchmen were just rowing in, and they were much astonished when we told them of our having seen a whale in the first outer inclosure of the trap—called the heart—yesterday. We had watched the great mammal—for a true mammal the whale is, sucking its young as does the land mammals—rising and falling, swimming about evidently examining this new grove of stiff looking plants it had got among. It was too long to turn in the trap so it adopted the wise method of sounding and turning its immense body when its great head was on the bottom, a full sixty feet below surface. It was well for the trap that it did this and their slowly swam out, for driven as are these great fir trees that they call "piles" and good and true of grain as these Douglas firs are, they could not have withstood the rush of the greatest of living creatures once it had room to work in.

What wondrous evolution is taking place in the great ocean; what strange impulse sends its living, gleaming streams of silver fish seeking new feeding grounds. In these Straits of Fuca the shad and the horse mackerel are now, for the first time in the memory of man, beginning to run. Is it that we have so decimated the hosts of salmon that there is now room on these feeding grounds for other fish—where these feeding grounds are no man may say, for we have not yet discovered where the salmon go after they are a year to a year and a half old, when they feed for the two and a half years that rounds out their full life, we have not a glimmer of information. True they seem to appear first on our coast along its northern shores, those that front on the Bering Sea—that and that only is our full tale of information.

Come with the lad and I over the tide rip riven waters of the Straits to the great net in the last inclosure of the salmon trap. Here ten thousand salmon—swam imprisoned. Among their silver sped chocolate and green rat fish, dove grey, exquisitely fashioned, graceful dog fish, glittering schools of smelt and minnows, huge skates waving their broad, pointed brown bird-like wings, mighty halibut hovered like dark shadows beneath the mass, great sturgeon showing their spiny sides, massive, bony, lustrous studs on the fleshy armor. A big black thing that threw

aside the silvery throng of salmon—as a rock dashes up the sparkling water—was a porpoise, the sea pig, a massive headed harmless thing that had been betrayed into the net by following a school of its natural food fish, minnow. Beneath it all swam the most repulsive form of all, an immense ground

shark that occasionally peered up through the circling, darting mass, its great emerald green eyes shining in the suns full ray like living gems. Soon a puffing tug came along, a small scow was floated into the net, the net was gathered in closer, the big steam trawler got to work and the marvelous struggling

mass was soon only a commercial heap of dead fish piled up on the scow's deck. We watched the men killing the porpoise. We saw them bring the sturgeon out—a fish that weighed two hundred pounds, it took two men to lift it, it took all their power to raise it shoulder high.

With the flapping, thumping noise of the mighty host of dying fish yet in our ears we left the fishtrap to gather other mysterious things from the great sea. We found on many a rock, water-logged bit of wood or sunken tree, many animal flowers. Anemones! They looked like sea flooded flower gardens with their variegated fishing tendrils catching the diatoms they feed upon. No sooner did the hand approach than all the exquisitely colored fronds were ingathered and only a dark, sticky bulb was left. No wonder the Swede we presented one to called after us: "What ish dosh?"

## MR. BENNETT'S WEDDING

The elder Bennett was by his contemporaries considered a chronic disturber of the journalistic peace. Of them, he, in turn, entertained a similarly low opinion, as the columns of the Herald will show. His thoughts, however, were chiefly of news for his readers (he was the first great American news getter and news printer), and he printed everything he got, whether fit or not, and thereby "shocked the staid propriety of his time."

"Dom it, mon, print it and make a fuss about it," was his motto—paraphrased, years later, by Story, of Chicago, into "Raise—ll and sell newspapers."

Whatever interested Mr. Bennett must, perforce, interest his readers, whether it related to a rival editor or his own personal affairs, horsewhippings included. Thus, having decided to marry, he invited his readers to sojourn with his inmost thoughts, to enjoy with him the thrills that naturally precede so interesting an event. Neither Mr. Pulitzer nor Mr. Hearst at a later period ever folded their readers so closely to their bosoms as did Mr. Bennett, in his issue of June 1, 1840 in this announcement at the top of his editorial page, under a display head:

To the Readers of the Herald—Declaration of Love—Caught at Last—Going to Be Married—New Movement in Civilization.

I am going to be married in a few days. The weather is so beautiful; times are getting so good; the prospects of political and moral reform are auspicious, that I cannot resist the divine instinct of honest nature any longer; so I am going to be married to one of the most splendid women in intellect, in heart, in soul, in property, in person, in manner that I have yet seen in the course of my interesting pilgrimage through human life.

"I cannot stop in my career. I must fulfill that awful destiny which the Almighty Father has written against my name, in the broad letters of life, against the wall of Heaven. I must give the world a pattern of happy wedded life, with all the charities that spring from a nuptial love. In a few days I shall be married according to the holy rites of the most holy Christian Church, to one of the most remarkable, accomplished and beautiful young women of the age. She possesses a fortune—a large fortune. She has no Stonington

shares or Manhattan stock, but in purity and uprightness she is worth half a million of pure coin. Can any swindling bank show as much? In good sense and elegance, another half a million; in soul, mind and beauty, millions on millions, equal to the whole specie of all the rotten banks in the world.

Happily, the patronage of the public to the Herald is, nearly \$25,000 per annum, almost equal to a president's salary. But property in this world's goods was never my object. Fame, public good, usefulness in my day and generation; the religious associations of female excellence; the progress of true industry—these have been my dreams by night and my desires by day.

In the new and holy condition into which I am about to enter, and to enter with the same reverential feelings as I would Heaven itself, I anticipate some signal changes in my feelings, in my views, in my purposes, in my pursuits. What they may be I know not—time alone can tell. My ardent desire has been through life, to reach the highest order of human excellence, by the shortest possible cut. Associated, night and day, in sickness and in health, in war and in peace, with a woman of this highest order of excellence, must produce some curious results in my heart and feelings, and these results the future will develop in due time in the columns of the Herald.

Meantime, I return my heartfelt thanks for the enthusiastic patronage of the public, both of Europe and of America. The holy estate of wedlock will only increase my desire to be still more useful. God Almighty bless you all.

Mr. Bennett forgot all his newspaper assailants in this sentimental flight. With the same oversight, however, in a postscript, in which he shook his fist at them all with the declaration that he would have no time to waste upon them and their attacks "until after marriage and the honeymoon." He remembered them also in his marriage notice, which appeared a week later in these words:

Married  
"On Saturday afternoon, the 6th inst., at St. Peter's Church, in Barclay Street, James Gordon Bennett, the proprietor and editor of the New York Herald, to Henrietta Agnes Crean."

"What may be the effect of this event on the great newspaper conflict now waging in New York, time alone can show."

A day without the elder Bennett must, indeed, have been lost to the calendar of early

New York; his readers must have been shrouded in inexpressible gloom during his absence. But he did return, and as the files of his newspaper show, he continued, with unabated vigor the newspaper conflict. Even Greeley, no mean jouster himself, finally dropped him with the declaration that "he was a hog who would disgrace his own sty."

### THE ROYAL FORTUNE

As was the case when Queen Victoria died, the London correspondents of American newspapers have seized the opportunity afforded by King Edward's death to make "copy" without data. They have been telling us that the King has left a fortune of a million pounds, and have given minute particulars of how the sum was acquired and to what extent the Queen-mother will benefit. No doubt there is a popular market for news of this kind, but unfortunately it is all evolved from the inner consciousness of the journalists. No one knows to this day what fortune was left by Queen Victoria, and no one outside of the royal family will ever have any knowledge of the sum left by her son. The fact is that the estates of the sovereigns of Great Britain are wholly exempt from probate and do not have to be returned to Somerset House in any shape. Thus they are free of the death-duty tax, and the public has no means of ascertaining their total.—M. A. P.

### SENTIMENTALITY VS. SENTIMENT

It will be remembered that in his Guildhall speech, Mr. Roosevelt made use of the following phrase: "Weakness, timidity and sentimentality may cause more harm than violence and injustice." Of all broken reeds sentimentality is the most broken reed on which righteousness can lean. In reply to a correspondent, who asked if he would substitute the word "sentiment" for the word "sentimentality," we are authorized to say that Mr. Roosevelt has sent the following tetter:

"Dear Sir—I regard sentiment as the exact antithesis of sentimentality, and to substitute 'sentiment' for 'sentimentality' in my speech would directly invert my meaning. I abhor sentimentality, and, on the other hand, I think no man is worth his salt who is not profoundly influenced by sentiment, and who does not shape his life in accordance with a high ideal. Faithfully yours,—Theodore Roosevelt."—London Times.

### A KANSAS FINANCIER

Here is an incident that a Chanute man tells as having occurred in a certain Kansas town. He was in the ticket office and watched the proceedings.

A man came up to the window and asked for a ticket to Kansas City, inquiring the price.

"Two twenty-five," said the agent. The man dug down into a well worn pocketbook and fished out a bill. It was a bank note for \$2. It was also all the money he had.

"How soon does this train go?" he inquired.

"In 15 minutes," replied the agent. The man hurried away. Soon he was back with three silver dollars, with which he purchased a ticket.

"Pardon my curiosity," said the ticket seller, "but how did you get that money? It isn't a loan, for I see you have disposed of the \$2 bill."

"That's all right," said the man. "No, I didn't borrow. I went to a pawn shop and soaked the bill for \$1.50. Then as I started back here I met an old acquaintance to whom I sold the pawn ticket for \$1.50. I then had \$3 and he has the pawn ticket for which the \$2 bill stands as security."

### A LIBERAL CREDIT

James R. Keene began in San Francisco his meteoric career as a stock broker and manipulator of stocks. In Keene's early days in the board, before becoming very wealthy, being worth about \$300,000, he could foresee a great market and high prices in the immediate future. He went to Ralston, president of the Bank of California, spoke enthusiastically about the market and its future, and asked for money. A stout man, high forehead, aquiline nose, and a pair of eyes that could read down into your inmost soul, Ralston was the picture, as he sat at his desk, of a successful and cautious, yet liberal banker. His long experience had made him an excellent judge of the mercantile community, and he could be quick about making a loan or refusing it.

"How much do you want?" said Ralston. "Don't know," answered Keene; "can't tell the exact amount, but would like to commence buying now."

"Well," said Ralston, "you draw your checks and I will tell you when to stop."

It is said Keene drew \$1,300,000 before he was halted.—Argonaut.

### n's Calendar

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