



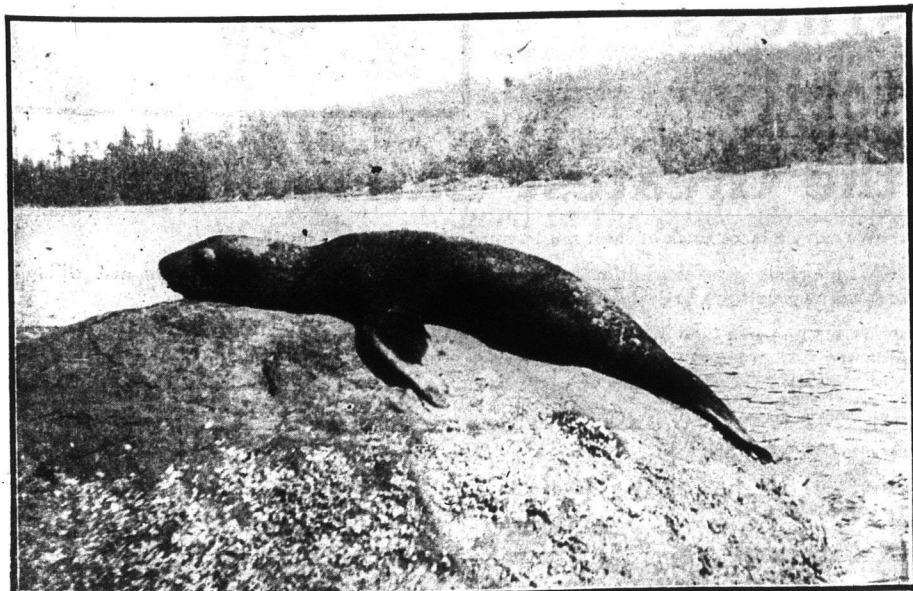
The Ground Shark. A well-deve oped mouth

vived him and he made one or two convulsive diving motions. I had a sharp knife ready on the seat beside me, ready to cut the towing rope if he sounded too deeply, but we beached him on the home beach with tired muscles and thankful hearts—and Fritz opened his mouth for me to picture. I felt like telling the lad the story of the dentist telling the patient "that is wide enough, I can just as well work outside; you know." Once the huge, soft-bodied thing was dead I started to dissect it—pray pardon this continual first personal pronoun—I do wish those patent medicine men were here. What a chance to sell "liver remedy." Here was an animal with two livers each six feet long that weighed over a hundred pounds. These were filled with rich oil. The entire skeleton was a thing of beauty, all the bones being so short of lime as to be transparent and pliable, just heavy gristle one might say. The rows of teeth were wonderful. Three rows on each jaw that rolled over, one set after another and hooked into the object the mouth had clutched. This was the only part of this half-ton shark that we could preserve, this and bits of the sand-paper-like skin. Here was a grand study for the microscope for those that love this branch of the work.

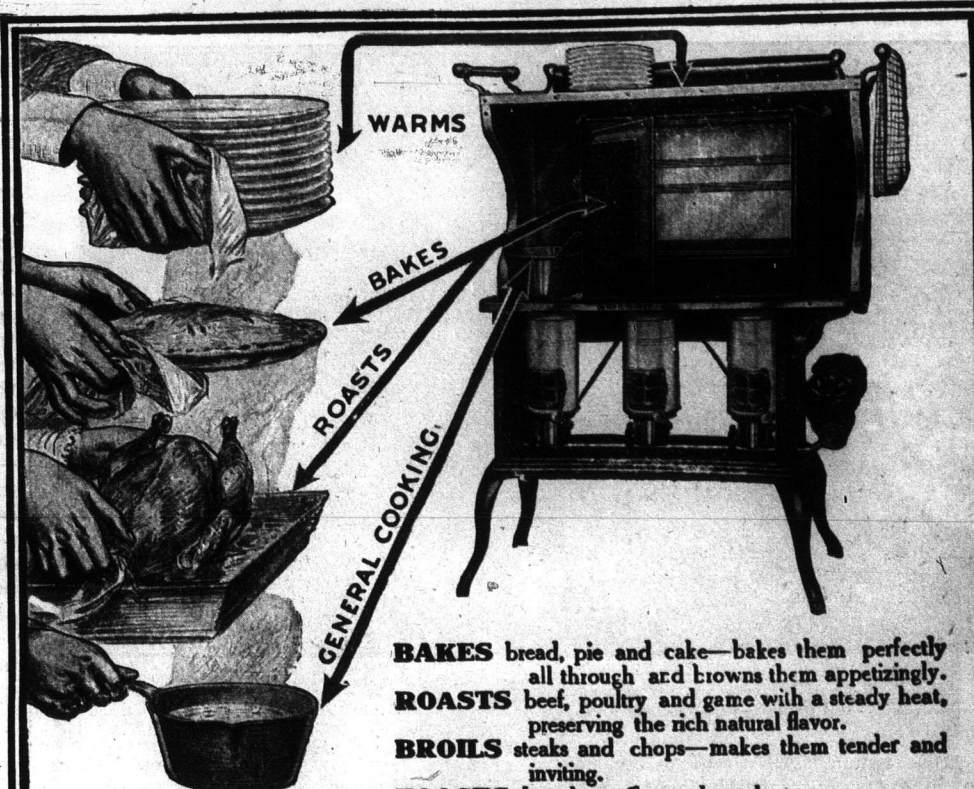
I wish to show you some Chinese toothpicks. Look well at the head of this Otary—the Sea Lion (Eumetopias stelleri) all the long white feelers that surround its mouth are used as toothpicks by the almond-eyed ones. One day when the lad and I were far out on the Vest Coast, some one hundred and fifty miles up our ranch, we chose an inner barrier reef as the place to count and watch one of the wildest of animals we have on the entire ranch, a great mass of "hauling out" sea lions. Of all the odd things we have seen through the old familiar lens of the telescope these were the strangest. Outside us rolled the eternal surf of the Pacific, about half a mile out it first met the outside barrier reef—we often hear the bare rocks called islands—here it threw its long foaming bands aloft after battling with the reef. There was

one double crown of the reef that rose some forty feet above the low tide line. This was shining yellow with a mass of sun dried, basking lions. On the upper summit, on the skyline, the "old men" of the band, great bulls that would weigh a ton, with long silky manes, reared their long necks and barked and moaned. About them, spread in a great yellow mass, sprawled their harem, the females they had chosen for their own. All about the two great rocks, on the sides, in the water about, in the wet valley between swam and basked and rolled an army of sea lions, the biggest ones slowly flapping their way up to the summit—and being instantly driven down discomforted by the lords of the harem. Now the incoming tide took a hand in the game and the yellow masses retreated up the rocks before it. Much lovemaking and a good deal of fighting ensued. On came the resistless tide; submerging the lower lions and, as it rolled back, leaving them of a dark brown. Larger and larger grew the swells, higher and higher rose the tide. Now a huge surf sweeps right over the crest of the twin summits and in its after drag roll many dark bodies over and over, down the slippery sides. The unequal assault keeps on until the water is literally alive with swimming lions. The most remarkable thing in this odd scene was when the beasts swept in on the high, roaring surf right unto the rock, one felt sure they would be killed by the impact—no, when the wave rolled back they were clinging to the rock. The reason is this, the long nails of the hind flippers are on the ends of the knuckles—we might say those of the fore flippers are on the ends of the flippers. My feet, as I write this rests on the hide of one of these big, harmless beasts. Remember, even they will fight if cornered; and when the halibut boats go out onto the beds, far off the shores, where the sea lions have been feeding for ages, can you wonder if they swiftly follow up the struggling fish on the line and snatch it off when it is almost in the fisherman's hands.

I am afraid the day will be done before we see a tithe of the animals on



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