

A SONG OF APRIL.

By Gardner Weeks Wood.

Down by the mill the puss-willows are winking
Eyes full of wonder-light
Born of the winter's night
Close by the drifted fence daffodils blink-

NAT BAKER'S PASSENGER.

It was down at Jupiter Inlet, near the end of the Indian River, that long arm of the sea which extends nearly half the length of Florida, and is separated from the ocean by a narrow stretch of sand, that I met Nat Baker.

"Now," says I, "he'll be afraid to pass that floppin' sail, and he'll be bound to jump overboard the next time I yell and make a rush at him."

"Well, sir, as he went forward I went aft, and as there was a fair wind I soon got my catboat in hand, and there wasn't any more danger of my bein' carried out to sea."

"Now, then, there came a question as to what I was to do; so I sat and considered it, and the panther, he lay quiet in the bow, and for all I know, he was considerin' the same thing."

"So I didn't steer into the bank, but kept sailin' up the river thinkin' and thinkin' as hard as I could, tryin' to find out how I was goin' to catch that panther alive, for I was gettin' real greedy about him."

"When I saw Martin's boat comin' down I was mighty glad, for he was just the man to tell me how to get out of the puzzle I was in about this panther I had on board."

"As soon as he came near I hollered to him to keep away from my boat, which he was glad enough to do when his eyes fell on what kind of a passenger I had."

"When I told him what had happened, he got more worked up still, and he hollered, 'you got to catch him alive! It'll never do to let that fellow go, nor to shoot him! There's money in a live panther!'"

"Yes, sir," I hollered back, "I know there is, and I'm goin' to have it if you'll help me to catch him alive."

"All right," says he. "I'll help you all I know how."

board, so I slipped out of my cabin and went astern.
"Ther'n he was at the very bow, crouchin' close, and so frightened that his tail stretched out without any life in it. I thought of gettin' my rifle and takin' a shot at him, but I was afraid to do that—and that's not easy with a panther—his hurt would take the scare out of him, and that catboat wasn't big enough for a wounded panther and me."

"But as long as he stayed scared and kept away from me, the thing for me to do was to get my boat in hand before I went into the inlet and was carried out to sea. I might have jumped overboard and swum ashore, but there are sharks in this river; and besides, I didn't want to lose my boat even if I did get rid of the panther."

"So I thought if I could get my sail up and then get back to the helm, I could run her into the bank some-where and let the beast jump ashore. But first I thought I'd give him another yell, and see if he'd jump over the bow. So I gave a tremendous holler, and at the same time I made a little run his way as if I was goin' to grab him. Although I acted mighty bold, I don't think I'd have done that if the cabin hadn't been between us."

"But that panther didn't make a move to jump overboard. When I made as if I'd pass the cabin on one side, he just sprang to the other side of it, and there he crouched, although there was mighty little room for him. Now was my time, and I just got forward as fast as I could, and at the same time he slipped aft. I ran up the sail without losin' any time about it, and the panther, he lay in the stern watchin' me and payin' no attention to the meat this time."

"Now," says I, "he'll be afraid to pass that floppin' sail, and he'll be bound to jump overboard the next time I yell and make a rush at him."

"It was astonishin' how brave I was actin', seein' what a coward I was. I gave another yell and moved his way, but I hadn't passed the cabin when he made a bolt on the other side of the sail, and there he was in the bow. He didn't mind the floppin' sail a bit. It seemed to me there was nothin' he was afraid of so much as jumpin' into the river."

"Now panthers can swim, I knew that well enough, but I guess this fellow knew somethin' about sharks. At any rate he wasn't goin' into the Indian River if he could help it."

"Well, sir, as he went forward I went aft, and as there was a fair wind I soon got my catboat in hand, and there wasn't any more danger of my bein' carried out to sea."

"Now, then, there came a question as to what I was to do; so I sat and considered it, and the panther, he lay quiet in the bow, and for all I know, he was considerin' the same thing. Now anybody with common sense would have told me that there was only one thing for me to do, and that was to steer into the bank as soon as I could and let the beast jump ashore. But a very queer feelin' had come over me. I wanted that panther!"

"A live panther is a good thing to have, for it's worth a pile of money if you can get him North, where there are people who want to buy wild beasts. Now that I'd found out how easy it was to scare this fellow, I didn't feel afraid of him, and it did seem to me that there ought to be some way that I could take him alive and send him North."

"So I didn't steer into the bank, but kept sailin' up the river thinkin' and thinkin' as hard as I could, tryin' to find out how I was goin' to catch that panther alive, for I was gettin' real greedy about him. I've heard that the savagest beasts, when they get themselves in a tight place that they don't know nothin' about, and don't know how they are goin' to get out of it; don't never think of hurtin' any livin' thing, havin' their minds so entirely fixed on gettin' out of danger themselves. That was the way with my panther, anyway; I'm sure he never thought of hurtin' me."

"It wasn't very long after sunrise when I saw a sail comin' down the river. The minute my eyes fell on it I knew what it was; it was the mail-carrier's boat. Martin—I don't know what his last name was—was a young man who used to come down the river in his little boat once a week to carry the mail from Titusville to Lake Worth. When he got to Jupiter Inlet he left his boat and carried the mail along the beach for six miles. He was a New England fellow, and had been to college and he knew a lot, but how he come to carry the mail down here I don't know."

"When I saw Martin's boat comin' down I was mighty glad, for he was just the man to tell me how to get out of the puzzle I was in about this panther I had on board."

"As soon as he came near I hollered to him to keep away from my boat, which he was glad enough to do when his eyes fell on what kind of a passenger I had. I never saw anybody so excited as he was when he first saw that loose panther crouchin' there, of his own free will, on board my catboat."

"When I told him what had happened, he got more worked up still, and he hollered, 'you got to catch him alive! It'll never do to let that fellow go, nor to shoot him! There's money in a live panther!'"

"Yes, sir," I hollered back, "I know there is, and I'm goin' to have it if you'll help me to catch him alive."

"All right," says he. "I'll help you all I know how."

that we was in water shallow enough for him to see bottom he'd know there wasn't no sharks there, and he'd scoot.
"Seemed like a longer time than it was, I reckon, but after a while Martin got into his boat and sailed up as close as he could to me without gettin' into jumpin' distance; then he told me what he had done."

"He'd bot a big fishin'-net on the schooner and three men to help him work it. I was to sail away purty much out of sight, for they didn't want the panther to see what they were at, and then they were to spread that net on a smooth place on the sand purty nigh the water, and each one of 'em was to take hold of a corner of it, and cover himself purty much up with palmetto leaves."

"Then Martin, he was to wave his hat, and I was to come in and run my hicle ashore at the place where he was to stick up a little stick in the sand."

"'What'll happen next?' says I. 'Haven't time to talk about that!' he shouted back at me. 'The men are comin' with the net. You do what I tell you and it'll be all right.'"

"So I sailed off, lookin' round every now and then to see if Martin was wavin' his hat. After a while, when I was puttin' the boat about to make a new tack, I saw Martin wave his hat, then run off and hide himself. So I made straight for the shore, and when I saw the little stick, I drove the bow of the boat right into it. I didn't have no chance to let down the sail, for I didn't want to frighten the panther out of the bow, but I just went in, not mindin' anythin'."

"When that panther saw we was comin' near shore, he turned himself around to get ready to jump, and just before we touched the sand I helped him out with a good yell."

"He gave a tremendous spring, and he must have landed purty near in the middle of the net, and in that very second up jumped Martin and the other men, and they jerked up that net so quick that he was caught in it. Then they all worked together like good fellows. I guess Martin had been talkin' to 'em and they wrapped the net around the panther before you could have said Jack Robinson. Then there was a circus!"

"The panther got his fore legs through the net at his first jump, and that kept him from doin' his best. But he bounded and jumped this way and that way, sometimes tail up and sometimes head up, and he pulled those fellows around in such a fashion that I was afraid he'd get away from 'em."

"But I joined in and helped, and after a while we got the net under him and over him so that he could hardly jump at all. He was like a big fly in a spider-web."

"Just about then there came along two fellows from the schooner, rollin' in a big, empty hoghead in front of 'em, and when they got nearly down to us, Martin, he went to help 'em, and in a little less'n no time they clapped that empty hoghead over the panther and net and all. Three of the men jumped on the bottom of it and kept it down, and there he was."

"Hurray!" I shouted. "That's the best piece of work I ever saw, but I'd like to know, Martin, how you're goin' to keep him in now you've got him?"

"All right," says Martin. "You can't do everything at once, but I've got my ideas about him. You fellows get the hoghead down on him, and I'll run to the schooner. One of you men come along with me, and Nat'll take your place."

"So me and the two other fellows was left to keep the hoghead down, which wasn't very hard to do, for the panther, he was so tangled up in the net he couldn't jump about much, though he did a lot of howlin'."

"After a while Martin came back with the other man, bringin' a lot of pieces of plank, split up a bout three or four inches wide and a long piece of good stout rope."

"That won't do, Martin," says I. "You can't nail them strips on to the open end of that hoghead; they won't hold a minute against a jumpin' panther."

"I'm not a-goin' to nail 'em," answers Martin, speakin' kind of short. "I'm goin' to do better'n that."

"And so he did, for Martin had a great mind. He took one piece of plank and run it under the head of the hoghead, which he had a lot of trouble to do, for the thing sometimes went again' the net, and sometimes again' the beast; but he got it under until it stuck out the other side. And then he put in another one, until he had slats under the whole of that open head."

"How are you goin' to keep 'em there?" says I.

"Wait till you see," says he. "Then he laid about the same number of slats on the bottom end, which was uppermost, makin' the men move about while he did it. Then with the rope he tied them strips which were across the open head to the strips which were on the solid bottom, lacin' the rope from one to the other, and then windin' the rest of the rope tight around the hoghead so that the slats wouldn't move."

"Now that's my story, but I can tell you somethin' that's a good deal more wonderful than that. That happened nigh a year ago, and I've got some of that money left yet!"—Youth's Companion.

1197 KILLED IN AUTO ACCIDENTS IN STATE IN YEAR. 111 INCREASE.

Dr. Wilmer R. Batt, State registrar of vital statistics, in his complete report on motor fatalities during 1922 shows that 1197 persons lost their lives in automobile accidents in Pennsylvania last year, an increase over 1921 of 111, although the number of motor vehicle licenses of all kinds in effect last year was 829,737, an increase of 160,148 over 1921.

The death rate per 1000 motor vehicle licenses last year was 1.4 the lowest since the State began keeping records of automobile fatalities. Although the number of motor licenses of all kinds increases substantially each year and the number of fatalities increases annually, the automobile death hazard, according to Dr. Batt, is decreasing annually.

In eight years 8936 persons have been killed in motor accidents in Pennsylvania, an average of 868 annually. If the number of fatalities in comparison to the total number of motor vehicle licenses of all kinds in effect had been proportionate to the number of fatalities in 1915 when there were 160,137 licenses of all kinds in effect, doctor Batt says the number of deaths from motor accidents last year would have reached the astounding figure of 10,000.

The following figures covering the last five years have been prepared by the bureau of vital statistics showing the number of motor licenses, persons killed in motor accidents and the rate per 1000 licenses:

Motor vehicles licensed 1918, 394,186; 1919, 481,224; 1920, 570,164; 1921, 689,589; 1922, 829,737.

Deaths from automobile accidents, 1918, 355; 1919, 818; 1920, 1042; 1921, 1086; 1922, 1197.

Number of persons killed per 1000 vehicles licensed, 1918, 2.5; 1919, 1.8; 1920, 1.8; 1921, 1.6; 1922, 1.4.

The death rate per 100,000 population in Pennsylvania in 1921, according to federal statistics, was 11.9. The rate per 100,000 in Pennsylvania in 1921 was lower than in twelve other States, including New York and New Jersey.

PROPOSED CHANGE IN INAUGURATION DATE.

An important change in the dates of the Presidential inauguration, and the meeting of Congress in regular session, is provided for in the amendment to the Federal Constitution which passed the Senate recently by a decisive vote.

It aims to advance the time for the inauguration of a President two months, namely from March to January, and the convening Congress eleven months. The proposition, as introduced by Senator Norris, of Nebraska, provides that "the terms of President and Vice President of the United States, elected after the adoption of this amendment, will commence at noon on the third Tuesday of January following their election," and that "the terms of Senators and Representatives will commence at noon on the first Monday in January following their election."

It is specified that "Congress shall assemble at least once in every year," on the date named, unless a different date should be fixed by law. It is claimed for the proposal to fix the first Monday in January for the meeting of Congress, and the third Monday in the same month for the inauguration of the President that it is logical and sound.

Senator Norris said it was desirable that when the President came into office he should find the new Congress organized and ready for business. This argument met with favor at the hands of the sixty-three Senators who voted for the resolution, and its force was not seriously combated by the six voting in opposition.

After the passage of the resolution by the House, where it is said to be regarded favorably, the resolution will be submitted to the State Legislatures for ratification during the next two years. In case of its approval by the necessary three-fourths of the States its provisions will apply to the next President and Congress who will take office in January, 1925.

Among the supporters of the resolution favoring the Constitutional change, the opinion prevailed that it would afford an opportunity for a quicker response to the popular will, as expressed at the polls, than that provided for under the present system which was adopted to meet conditions that no longer exist.

Simply Impossible.

In a telegraph office a woman chewed the penholder, wrote vigorously, crossed out words and tore up blanks. This occurred several times. A bystander observed her with some interest and then sauntered over to the operator.

"Seems to be having a tough time of it," he said.

"Nothing serious," yawned the operator.

"Huh?" inquired the onlooker.

"About an hour ago her husband wired her that he was going to stay over for a football game or something," the operator explained.

"Well?" still not satisfied.

"She is trying to tell him what she thinks of him in ten words."

Rats and Sparrows are Slaughtered Wholesale.

Howe, Ind.—Eleven thousand sparrow heads and 300 rat tails were the net result of a campaign waged in Springfield township, Lagrange county, to rid the section of the birds and rodents, held by the farmers to be a menace. A similar contest was conducted in Greenfield township, where thousands of sparrows and hundreds of rats were killed.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT.

No accidents are so unlucky but that the prudent may draw some advantage from them.—Rochefoucauld.

In the days of our dear mid-Victorian grandmothers, when hoopskirts extended the proportions of those worthy ladies far beyond the confines of a coat, the shawl, of necessity, was an important article of dress.

Of the many varieties of these garments in vogue at that day there were two of a distinct elegance, the cashmere manufactured in the beautiful Vale of Cashmere, celebrated in song and story, and the Paisley from the ancient Scottish town of the same name. One or both of these lovely products of the hand loom were apt to be in the wardrobe of any lady of affluence a generation or two ago, and no bride's trousseau was thought to be complete without one.

The cashmere, examples of which are occasionally to be found in this country at the present time, were exquisite works of art—so soft and so finely woven that although of enormous size they could easily be drawn through a lady's finger ring. The wool for these shawls came from a certain breed of goats, from Thibet, said to be the most beautiful in the world. Only the finest of this—that lying next to the skin of the animal—was used in the manufacture of shawls. The lovely and intricate patterns for these garments were handed down from time immemorial, from an incredibly ancient Hindu ancestry, the originals of which were preserved as heirlooms in ancient castles and were regarded with almost sacred veneration.

The Paisleys, more frequently to be met with in our own country, while often exquisite in texture and of the same Asiatic designs, intricate and delicately lovely as old Venetian point, are, after all, but imitations of the incomparable cashmere. In the home of its birth the Paisley shawl, however, is not so designated, but is called a "Harness Plaid" (pronounced plade), the word harness indicating the character of the design.

During the time of their manufacture, when 8000 looms were kept busy all day long meeting the demand for them, three grades of the shawls were woven—that for ceremony which was naturally the most lovely, that for every-day use and the tartan worn by the men of the clans as a distinguishing insignia.

The shawl of ceremony, which was the finely woven one with Asiatic pattern, was never worn by an unmarried woman. On the Sunday following her marriage, however, when she was "kirked" she appeared for the first time in her "harness plaid." To be "kirked" meant simply that on the first Sunday after the marriage ceremony the bride and groom, with their attendants, went to church in a body.

Of great length—the garment measures three and one-half yards long by one and three-quarters yards wide—it was first folded in the middle, then across to form a triangle, the upper point perhaps a foot from the bottom one, and then thrown across the shoulders and fastened with a large pin made especially for the purpose. A silk bonnet tied under the chin with a big bow was worn with this and quaint and coy indeed must have been the fair Scotch lassie so robed on her "kirkin'" day.

Queen Victoria, dear old lady of traditions that she was loved the Paisley to her dying day, and every girl friend of her little Majesty knew well that on her wedding day a present of a rare one from her beloved sovereign would be hers.

A dear old Scotch lady, who is not only rich in memories of her native land but has brought with her to this country many of her family treasures, includes among these some lovely old Paisleys. One arrived from Scotland but a few days ago—a family heirloom sent to her daughter. In this, mother, grandmother, and she thinks great-grandmother, were "kirked." It is a rarely lovely one in both design and workmanship.

The body of the shawl has a central star-shaped design from which radiate in conventionalized form the usual Oriental pear and floral patterns. The border above a narrow fringe is woven in squares separated by narrow strips of exquisitely dainty design. The background of these squares alternate in greens, blues, reds, black and cream, and upon them are embossed thistles and other insignia emblematic of Scotland.

Doubtless many of these rare old shawls of Scotland and a few of their still more rare prototypes of India are treasured among us as heirlooms. Happy, indeed, is she who can make a visit to moth-protected chest and pull from its lavender-scented contents one of these gorgeous shawls of the Orient or even a lovely old Paisley made in its likeness. Fortunate, indeed, if these exquisite fruits of the loom have escaped the vandal's hand and remain in fact, and let us hope that, although at the present moment we are enjoying a revival of the vogue for these same old patterns, none of these antique works of art will fall under the shears of the irreverent and be converted into garments of a passing style.

In the past, at another period of frenzy for things Eastern, many of them were, and in some cases have they been put to even baser uses.

In a little cottage set on a back street not so long ago was seen a weather-stained but gorgeous remnant of an old Paisley shawl spread over a flower-bed to protect its plants from an impending frost, and many a time are bits of those exquisitely woven fabrics used for saddle blankets.

One woman is even now using two rarely lovely ones as linings for bed quilts. What would be the feelings of an East Indian—heir to all the ages—should he by chance see one of his own treasures, designed by a master artist of the remotest past and woven by an almost adoring disciple of the ancient craft, thus dishonored? Even for those who care nothing for traditions—for whom the past holds no particular charm—there should be some appreciation of the intrinsic value of these objects of a highly developed art.

FARM NOTES.

—The use of wood ashes, lime and fresh stable manure on potato fields, is known to increase scab infection.

—Would you give a bushel of grain if you were sure to get six in its place at the end of the season? This is the right way to regard the treatment of seed grain in the prevention of smut.

—Why do potatoes turn dark after peeling? Because they have been kept under warm conditions and the consequent starting of growth has caused the chemical changes which permit the tissue to darken upon exposure to the air.

—Information on the identification and control of insect pests and plant diseases will be gladly furnished by the Bureau of Plant Industry, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at Harrisburg. Identifications can be properly and promptly made from samples of plants showing symptoms of the disease or the injury done.

—Unfortunately, however carefully the breeding pens may be mated and no matter how selective the operator may be in choosing the hatching eggs, it does not follow that all of the eggs will run fertile. By fertile is meant the capacity of the life germ or embryo within the egg, sometimes spoken of as the germinal disc, to develop into a chick.

—This incapacity is due to the absence of fertilization. Such eggs are known as infertile, sterile or clear eggs.

On the other hand, all fertile eggs are not capable of normal development. The germinal disc may start life under the influence of the hen or incubator, and in a few days expire, or the embryo may attain considerable size and then die, which is usually caused by some reproductive weakness in the layer of the egg or by improper care of the egg, either before hatching or during the hatch. In poultry parlance such eggs are called dead germs.

It is considered good practice to remove these non-hatchable eggs during the period of incubation, especially if the hatching is done artificially. To accomplish this it is necessary for the incubator operator to test or candle the eggs first, for fertility, on or about the seventh day of incubation, and later for the strength of the embryos, toward the close of the hatch.

Some operators prefer to make only one test, about the tenth day, with the idea of detecting both infertile eggs and dead germs at the one operation. This plan is satisfactory when it is known that the rate of fertility is high, as is usually the case with leg-horns and similar lightweight breeds.

Hatches can be brought off without any testing. Witness the hen that steals her nest. But it is not considered good practice for the following reasons:

By removing the clear eggs as soon as they can be detected, and in the case of white-shelled eggs, it is no trouble to examine the contents on the third or fourth day of incubation; such clear eggs can be used as food on the home table or hard boiled and fed to little chicks, in which usage the eggs are chopped up, including the shells, and mixed with stale bread-crumbs. This mixture makes one of the best first feeds for baby chicks. The mixture should be sprinkled with fine grit, to aid digestion, and fed on a clean board.

Clear eggs which have been removed from the incubator within a week are edible; their quality has not been impaired, except that they have endured a certain amount of evaporation. And because of this evaporation they should not be sold as fresh eggs.

Understand, however, this refers to the clear eggs—strictly clear eggs, not to the dead germs. The latter are worthless, except as fertilizer, and should be treated as dead animal matter, for such they really are. A good plan is to bury them in the manure pit or compost heap.

Apart from the economy of salvaging the clear eggs as food, which is considerable where the eggs run 20 to 30 per cent. infertile, as they frequently do among the heavy breeds, by removing the non-hatchable eggs as soon as possible, additional room is created on the incubator trays, which means greater ease and efficiency in turning and handling the good eggs.

This is a worthy feature, indeed, especially if the trays are started full, as all who have run an incubator will attest. A crowded tray is difficult to turn, yet it is advisable to start the tray full in view of the non-hatchable eggs which must be eliminated.

It is more complicated to describe the work of testing hatching eggs than it is to perform the work. In fact, the most inexperienced person will have no difficulty in distinguishing the fertile from the infertile eggs so apparent are the distinctions.

The clear egg appears absolutely translucent, except for a floating shadow, which is easily identified as the yolk. The live germ about four days old resembles a spider. The body of the embryo represents the body of the spider, and the radiating blood vessels its legs.

The embryo is located about one-third the distance from the large end of the egg, floating quite freely. If the embryo is not detected at first glance give the egg a quick twist and the "spider" will come into view. If, instead of the floating spider-like germ, there is a bright red line in the shape of a semicircle, or a red streak fixed to the shell, it indicates a dead germ. Sometimes a dead germ takes the form of a dark spot adhering to the shell membrane. Such eggs should be discarded.

If the embryo in some eggs appear much smaller than others it is likely the germs are weak and lack vitality to develop normally. But do not discard these eggs unless you are an experienced operator. The best plan is to mark them with a pencil, and to replace them in the machine for further observation at the second test.

To examine the contents of an egg, a process known as candling, the egg is held before a spot of light, in a darkened room, and the shell of the egg being translucent, the inside "works" are made visible.

—Get your job work done here.