

# HUNTING THE BULL FROG

## METHODS OF CAPTURING THIS EPIQUEUREAN DELICACY.

Professional Froggers use a Bull's-Eye Lantern and a Bag—Preparing the Catch for Market.

Every evening just as Old Sol sinks behind the hills of Virginia and the sunset gun booms forth the close of another day there is a class of men who are just beginning their day's work, or more properly speaking, their night's work. And it is a peculiar kind of labor. They are frog hunters and earn quite a respectable livelihood by hunting frogs for the restaurant and hotels.

Almost every one is familiar with the unmusical cry of the frog, but few are they who know one when they see it. Many people in speaking of frogs confound them with toads. Now while frogs and toads are closely related, they have little in common except appearance. The frog's legs are much larger than the toad's and his voice is also superior. There are a great many frogs eaten in Washington.

Not many years ago frogs' legs, as a delicacy, were unknown, but that time has passed away and now frogs' legs on toast is considered a great delicacy all the world over. There are lots of frogs about Washington. The many swamps about the city fairly swarm with the agile croakers, and the river, particularly the Eastern branch, is noted not only as being one of the best breeding places for frogs but of furnishing the very finest species. Frogs come from swamps in all localities, but the climate and water, coupled with the abundance of food which is found in the Potomac River, greatly enhances the value of frogs which are caught about here. There are a great many ways of hunting frogs.

One way is by shooting them. This is mostly practiced by boys, who, armed with a parlor rifle, wade cautiously through the marshes and shoot the unsuspecting froggies as they sit in some shady nook watching for flies. It takes sharp eyes and a good marksman, however, to hunt successfully in this manner. Another way, and by far the one which furnishes the most sport, is by fishing for them, or better still, casting for them. A good trout fisherman armed with a light bamboo rod and a gaudy-colored fly can find plenty of sport by casting among the reeds and grasses along the edge of a marsh. On the other side of the bridge the other day a Star reporter was greatly amused at seeing a small colored boy with a long switch to which was attached a line and a piece of red flannel on the end with a hook concealed in it catching frogs as fast as he could put in. While his attention was diverted to a passing train a frog snapped at his line and was in turn gobbled up by a snapping turtle, which later, finding himself caught, swam to the bottom and refused to be moved by the lone fisherman, who thought he had a sturgeon.

The modus operandi of catching frogs in the most approved manner—that is, with bull's eye and sack—seems simple enough to uninitiated, but is quite the reverse in actual practice. A few nights since a Star reporter accompanied a couple of the most experienced frog hunters on one of their nightly excursions. Arriving at a point on the Eastern branch everything was found to be in readiness for the trip. A frogger's boat is not in itself peculiar and not unlike hundreds of other boats used for various purposes on the river. A light skiff propelled by a broad paddle or a pushing pole makes good progress. The outfit is simple enough. Several bags, a light hard-wood stick and a bull's-eye lantern of the most approved pattern, with the strongest possible reflector, is all that is needed. It was nearly ten o'clock when the boat pushed off, the Star reporter in the bow with a lantern and the hunter behind furnishing the motive power. It was a warm, murky evening, with plenty of malaria in the wind.

The trip to the hunting ground was uneventful. Soon the boat was moving through the still waters of the Eastern branch, hugging the shore closely, and the music of the game sounded from nearly every direction. The old hunter spoke in whispers, but his voice sounded strangely loud on the still air. But the frogs sang on unmindful of it all. It was a grand concert with never a discord, not even a jar. The deep bass voice of the old patriarch and the treble of the young female, coupled with the musical tenor of the young and juicy male, mingled with the quarrelsome tone of old Mrs. Frog and the almost pathetic tone of the very small youngster, whose voice was not unlike the cry of an infant, furnished a unique chorus. The boat skirted the banks, and at the command of the old hunter the slide of the bull's-eye lantern was thrown and the light flashed out.

It was dazzling in its brightness, and for a moment the frogs, squatting about on the waukapin leaves, ceased their croaking and winked helplessly at the light, unable even to drop into the water. This was the hunter's chance, and as the boat glided past them (the light still shining in their eyes) he seized the frogs one after another by the nape of the neck with his right hand and transferred them to a bag which he held open. The work was done quickly, and in a short time half a dozen frogs, who by this time had thoroughly come out of their dazed condition, were making vigorous efforts to escape. The hunting continued in the same way until three dozen and a half large frogs were added to the stock in trade. This, at the wholesale price of eighty cents per dozen, made the trip quite profitable. A large number of the hunters have men to prepare the frogs for market. The reporter had an opportunity of witnessing the modus operandi.

An old colored man armed with a sharp knife made a circular incision about the frog's body at the point where the legs join, and inserting his finger in the cut quickly and deftly drew the skin off. A slit was then made and the upper portion of body of the frog was

stripped of its beautiful green covering.

Up to within only a few years ago only the legs of the frogs were eaten, but now everything except the head is utilized. Every cook has his own method of preparing frogs for the table and, of course, the taste varies with the cook. The most popular way is to fry them in butter and serve hot with parsley. The use of frogs for the sick room is recommended by physicians and a broth made from their tender legs is excellent food for weak stomachs. Their meat tastes somewhat like chicken, although it is vastly superior in flavor and tenderness.—Washington Star.

### SELECT SIFTINGS.

Beaver houses are not as plentiful as they used to be.

A Milwaukee (Wis.) grocer can sleep ten days at a stretch.

It is estimated that 1000 trains traverse Ohio every twenty-four hours.

A New York girl of fourteen has just been married for the third time.

Dense smoke from the far-off Michigan fires spread over a part of Georgia recently.

Invitations to open air entertainments in England always contain the proviso "Weather permitting."

The largest forest fires in Michigan have occurred a decade apart—in 1871, 1881 and 1891.

Santa Barbara, Cal., boasts of a hotel waiter who can take an order for dinner in seven different languages.

Paulding County, Ga., has a farm horse that drinks two gallons of buttermilk per day, and seems to relish and thrive on it.

An Osborne County (Kan.) man with a pack of hounds is bagging from ten to fifteen wolf scalps a day, on which he realizes \$3 apiece.

Under the present game laws of New York the English sparrow is not protected, and it is made a misdemeanor to give food or shelter to that bird.

In the great animal market at Hamburg, in Germany, giraffes sell at \$7000 a pair, chimpanzees go at \$800 apiece, and select lots of Sumatra monkeys at \$1000.

The period of "a generation" has been lengthened; it used to be thirty years, and later increased to thirty-four; now a scientist says, the average term of human life has increased in the last fifty years from thirty-four to forty-two years.

It seems that the Chinese preserved ginger of commerce is not ginger at all. The director of the botanical gardens at Hong Kong has succeeded in obtaining the flower of the plant used and has identified it as the Alpina Galanga. Though not ginger, it is very nice.

The greatest novelty in dolls has now been invented at Nuremberg, the great German town for dolls and playthings. A machine in the doll cases is to move its hand and write neat little letters on a slate or on paper. Whole sentences can be written, to the great amusement of children.

The street railways of Paris are under the Government control and the rules for their guidance are very strict. Only four passengers are allowed to stand on the back platform, and they must pay the same fare as the first-class passengers inside, viz., six cents, while those on the roof of the car ride at half rates.

While tearing down the walls of an old house in the village of Deutsch-Redingen, near the Luxembourg boundary, the workmen found the corpses of a German officer and a private, in full uniform. The bodies were wonderfully well preserved. It is supposed that the men were murdered during the Franco-Prussian war.

Sergeant Laporte, of the Indianapolis (Ind.) Metropolitan Police Force, owns a rooster of a nondescript breed that kills rats and is as good a mouser as the average cat. It will patiently lay in wait, and when its opportunity comes it seizes the unsuspecting rodent amidstships and shakes it as a terrier would. Then he holds it with his claws and tears it to pieces with his beak, after which he summons his harem to pick the morsels.

A Columbus (Ind.) musical freak is called "Singbilly," though his proper name is William Isintrigger. He plays in a peculiar manner with his lungs any tune with a distinctness and clearness that brings out every note as fully as it can be brought out on any piano or other musical instrument by the most accomplished performer. The effort frequently causes his body to writhe with contortions and his features to pinch with apparent pain, but he says it does not hurt him.

### Curiosities of Chess.

Who really invented the game of chess history does not definitely prove, but it is known that a Chinese Mandarin 1000 years ago was able to soothe his troops, when they were clamorous for home, by proposing the game for their leisure hours when in winter quarters.

The game differs in the various countries of the world. Thus, in the Hindoo game, four distinct armies are employed, each with their king, each corps counting among its fighters an elephant and a knight which slay but cannot be slain. The Chinese game of chess, which boasts of the title of chokoo-kong-ki (the play of the science of war), has a river running through the center of the board, which their elephants, equivalent to our bishops, cannot cross, and there is a fort which their kings cannot pass.

Under the Sanskrit name of chaturaga a game, essentially the same as modern chess, was played in Hindostan nearly 5000 years ago. From Hindostan the game is said to have been carried to Persia and thence to Arabia. The Arabs introduced it into Spain and the rest of Western Europe during the eighth century, where it became the principal pastime at the year 1000. There is a record of Pope Alexander II. reproving a bishop for playing the game and compelling him to wash the feet of twelve beggars as a punishment for his sin.—St. Louis Republic.

# NEWS AND NOTES FOR WOMEN.

Paniers are coming in very fast. Wash-silks are in great demand. The newest hat is the "orchid" hat. Finger rings are as popular as ever. Tennis bat brooches are very seasonable.

Epaulets are lower and more nearly square.

Gold passementerie is used on house dresses.

Most of the new bonnets have receding crowns.

Diamond half hoop rings continue to find favor.

White horsehair bonnets are often very pretty.

Belts are an important item of toilet this season.

The season in dress is a showy and gaudy one.

Corduroy is now the fashionable material in Paris.

The mania for perfumed letter paper is on the increase.

White undressed kid gloves are a caprice of the moment.

Women are to be found in all the statistical offices of Saxony.

It is a whim just now to be photographed in Greek costume.

Diamond asps are worn as brooches and as ornaments in the hair.

There are said to be 250,000 self-supporting women in New York.

Snakes are much affected as ornaments by fashionable young women just now.

Patti spends many hours with her feathered pets, of whom she is extremely fond.

The latest new idea that girls have taken up is that of massaging their noses.

Some of the black net veils are sprinkled with disks and crescents of green.

The favorite wife of the Sultan was once a poor girl living in the coal mines of France.

Statistics show that more trained nurses marry than any other class of women workers.

It is said that 5,000,000 song birds are killed every year to decorate the hats of American ladies.

Debutantes who have pearls to wear are fortunate, the gems being both appropriate and becoming.

Spreads to use on the white and gold bedsteads are made of white net and lined with old gold satin.

A couple of spurs, formed of pearls and connected by a gold cord, look well at the neck of a riding bodice.

Matilda Aaron, a young lady of seventeen, completely blind, has matriculated at Melbourne (Australia) University.

Much gold is worn on hats; gold lace, gold passementeries and satin ribbons with fine designs in gold being equally used.

Candlesticks festooned with roses and tied up with satin ribbons for the wax to splash are the latest fancy in table decoration.

Pink pearls from Florida and the West Indies are prized as souvenirs by tourists, who have them mounted in scarf pins and brooches.

The whip bracelet, as the name indicates, represents a flexible whip held in circular form by the leash which is wound around it several times.

At present 229 woman students are studying at universities in Switzerland, of whom six are studying law, 166 medicine and sixty-seven philosophy.

Twenty-three States now admit women to practice at the Bar. The pioneer woman lawyer of America, Arabella A. Mansfield, was admitted to the Bar in 1869.

Snakes, pom-poms, wings, birds' heads, lace and tinsel butterflies, fruits, leaves, flowers, nuts, cones, acorns and thistles are some of the things used in decorative millinery.

The new peplum coats take the place of dress waists and are vandyked on the sides in very deep points, but are shorter, front and back, than any of the "Louis" coats now worn.

The pure and sweet-scented lily of the valley has a warm friend in the Prince of Wales, who devotes acres of ground to the cultivation of the flower at Sandringham, his country seat.

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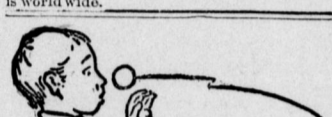
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