

# MOSE HOWARD'S FISH-TRAP

BY J. R. HAMMOND.

**N**ICODEMUS SQUAB, professor of orthography in the Skunkville district school, was a man of an inquiring turn of mind.

Overhearing some of the scholars discussing a prospective con hunt that was to come off the following Saturday night, the professor drew near and inquired if they would allow him to join them.

"Of course you kin join us," said Mose Howard, who was the ringleader in all the devilment in the neighborhood. "Glad to have you go 'long. We'll call for you."

"Thank you," said the professor. "I never was con hunting in my life, though I've always wanted to go—just to see how it is done, you know."

According to promise, Mose Howard, Dick Miller and Joe Sanley called for the professor, who was ready and waiting, and who joined the hunters, anticipating a jolly time.

After winding up the con hunt, which resulted in the capture of five possums and three coons, Mose Howard proposed that they should go back by the fish-trap and catch a mess of fish.

The proposition was unanimously agreed to, and they struck off down the creek, the professor bringing up the rear, puffing and blowing, though highly elated at the realization that this additional net in the program promised, as well as at the prospect of a successful raid upon the finny tribe.

The queer contraption that Mose designed with the name of fish-trap, consisted merely of a large sack held open by a hoop, around which the mouth of the sack was fastened, and a couple of ropes, one end of each of which was fastened to each side of the hoop, while the other ends were fastened to trees on the opposite sides of the stream. In such a way as to allow the hoop to remain about half way submerged.

On the bank of the creek was a lantern, in which was about half a tallow candle.

Producing some matches Mose lit the candle and proceeded to explain to the professor the modus operandi of catching fish with his new-fangled trap.

"You just take the lamp and wade into the trap and hold the lamp right in front of the mouth so that the fish can see how to run in, and we boys'll go away down the creek and drive the fish up and into the trap."

The professor, as unacquainted of any trick as a baby, slinked himself, and then taking up the lantern, waded into the trap that the boys set for him instead of for fish, and in the construction of which they had not only exhausted their financial resources in the purchase of the material out of which it was constructed, but also their ingenuity in the getting up of the same.

"Right," granted the professor, as he reached the trap and placed the lantern in the position indicated, "this water is cold as ice. I want you boys to make haste."

"Yes, sir," responded the boys. "You'll hear us hollerin' as we come," said Mose, and off they started down the creek at a trot.

"All right," said the professor. As soon as they got out of sight, they left the lantern in a point some 400 yards distant from the trap, wading, seating themselves on a log they began the most uproarious din of yelling and howling that had ever awakened the slumbering echoes of those old woods since the aborigines had created the premises.

After about an hour spent in this way the boys got up and advanced slowly up the bank of the stream about 100 yards, when they seated themselves on another log, where they continued to whoop and yell like so many wild Indians.

After another hour thus spent they waded another advance, which brought the professor and the fish-trap within their range of vision, though, owing to the darkness they were not visible to him.

"Hurry up, boys!" he shouted. "I'm nearly froze, and the candle's nearly out."

"That was what they were waiting for—the candle to burn out—so that their failure to catch fish could be laid to the absence of the light."

"Yes, sir," they shouted back; "we're hurrying as fast as we can." And renewing their yell they advanced slowly—very slowly—up the stream.

"Hurry up, hurry up!" again shouted the professor. "The candle will be out in two minutes."

"Ay, ay, sir," shouted Mose in reply, "but you must stop hollerin' or you'll akter the fish."

Sure enough, in about two minutes the candle gave a last convulsive flicker, and in the twinkling of an eye thick darkness reigned as absolutely over the professor and the fish-trap as elsewhere.

"Boys," said Mose, in a tone loud enough for the professor to hear him. "There ain't no use wadin' in this water 'ny longer; let's go back an' sit our 400."

Seating themselves on a log they sat perfectly silent for a while—long enough, as they thought, for it to have taken them to go back to where they commenced their drive, dress themselves and reach that point on their return—when they got up and resumed their progress up stream.

On reaching the trap they found the professor on shore, and though he had completed his toilet, his teeth were chattering louder than a pair of cast-iron rivets rattling off a quickstep march.

"We'll have to try it over 'n' some other time," said Mose, "and fetch more candle with us. I caught you had plenty this time, but we didn't. I guess I'll bring enough next time."

"Why didn't you fellows hurry up?" said the professor. "What made you come so slow?" the chattering of his teeth as he spoke causing him to cut the words into more than the legitimate number of syllables to which they were entitled.

"Couldn't come no faster," said Mose. "The water was so thumderin' cold the fish wouldn't drive fast."

Realized with this explanation the professor fell into ranks as the boys filed off in the direction of home. The exercise of walking soon brought a reaction in his system, the first effect of

which was to put a stop to the music of the castanets, and on reaching home he pronounced himself all right again.

Some time during the ensuing week Mose Howard informed the professor that they were going to try the fish-trap again—the following Saturday night and asked him if he didn't want to go along.

The professor gave an involuntary shudder as the recollection of that protracted soaking in ice water of the previous Saturday night flashed across his mind.

Discretion prompted him to give a negative response. Curiosity, however, got the better of discretion, and he accepted the invitation.

"I'll be on hand," said he. "There's no fun standing in that cold water, especially when you get no fish, but if you can stand it I guess I can."

At the appointed time the boys came by, when the professor joining them, they proceeded to the fish-trap.

On arriving there Mose produced a couple of pieces of candle, one of which he proceeded to light and put in the lantern. It was nearly twice as long as the one they had burned out on the previous occasion.

The other piece he placed in the lantern so that it could be easily got at if it should be needed.

This latter piece Mose had manufactured himself. It especially for the occasion, and had taken some little pains in its construction.

After soaking the wick in water until it was perfectly saturated he had taken a skillet and melted some tallow therein, then placed the wick in a mold, he filled the latter with the melted tallow, and the thing was accomplished.

This particular candle he had carefully marked so as to be able to distinguish it from any other candle.

Before completing their arrangements at the fish-trap preparatory to beginning the drive the professor proposed that one of the boys should take his place at the trap while he accompanied the others and assisted in driving the fish.

"Kin you swim?" asked Mose Howard.

"No," answered the professor. "Well, you'd run the risk of gettin' drowned, then," said Mose.

"You run on, then," said the professor, "and I'll mind the trap."

So on the boys started, and going down the stream about a mile, seated themselves upon a log, and began yelling and whooping as on the previous occasion.

Hour after hour passed, each hour seeming to the benumbed professor an age.

The yelling seemed to approach slowly but surely.

The boys had now arrived at a point where every motion of the professor was distinctly visible.

The piece of candle Mose had lighted and put in the lantern was nearly burned out. Taking up the other piece the professor proceeded to light it. Placing it in the lantern it gave a splutter and went out. Dark! Dark was no name for it. No moon, no stars, no matches.

But that loveliest candle would have been a match for a whole box of matches.

"What in thunder's the matter now?" shouted Mose.

"The candle's gone out!" shouted the professor back. "Have you any matches?" he inquired.

"Nary match," said Mose.

"What's to be done?" inquired the professor.

"Nuthin'," said Mose. "The thing's played out. Put on your cloze, while we go and git our'n and then we'll skip for home."

Seating themselves on a log the boys remained quiet for a while, then rising to their feet they came up to where the professor was waiting around trying to get up a circulation.

"Another waterhant," said Mose.

"Looks a good deal like it," said the professor.

"Don't know why the mischief some of us didn't think to bring some matches," said Mose.

"I don't know, either," responded the professor in a deprecating tone, as though he entertained the idea that somehow he had been mainly instrumental in producing the bad luck.

"Better luck next time," said Mose, philosophically, as he struck out for home, followed by the others.

They had proceeded about two-thirds of the way home, groping their way as best they could through the thick darkness, when a shrill, prolonged scream directly ahead of them, and apparently at no great distance, broke upon their startled ears.

"Painter!" ejaculated Mose, in a low tone of voice, though sufficiently loud to be distinctly audible to the professor, at the same time springing to one side, and the next moment he was out of the professor's hearing.

The fact was he had only taken a couple of steps and then squatted in the grass, as completely concealed from his companions by the intense darkness as though he had been on the opposite side of the globe.

"Painter!" repeated the other boys, following Mose's example of springing to one side and squatting in the grass.

Left alone the professor, with hair on end, paused a moment to collect his scattered thoughts, but only a moment. Another scream, long drawn out and apparently but a few yards distant, set his plump body in motion, and the next moment he was straining it across the country as fast as his duck legs could carry him.

Tumbling over a log lying on the edge of a bank some twenty feet high and nearly perpendicular, down which he rolled, he landed in a mud hole at the bottom.

Gathering himself up he began looking for his hat, which had parted company with him on the way down the bank, when another scream breaking upon his ear he struck out once more on his race for life, hatless and covered with mud from his head to his heels.

Coming to a briar patch he was on the point of derring from his course in order to try and get around it when another scream precipitated the terrified professor into the patch like a catapult.

Emerging from the briar patch with his coat-tails torn into ribbons, the mud-begrimed professor held on the even tenor of his way without any diminution of speed for a hundred yards or so, when his pace began to slacken a little. Another scream, however, put him on his mettle again, but as that was the last, and as he was about exhausted, he soon settled down to a walk, and presently stumbling over a log, he picked himself up and seated himself thereon.

After resting a while, plunged in the meantime in a deep cogitation, he finally concluded to try and seek a shelter for the remainder of the night. So, starting forward, he wandered about, first in one direction and then in another, and he was not until daylight began to streak the eastern horizon that he stumbled on a clearing in the woods, in the midst of which was a log cabin.

Cautiously approaching the cabin, he had reached the foot of a sapling some fifty steps from the door, when a big dog came dashing around the corner of the house, barking furiously.

No sooner did the professor catch sight of the dog bounding across in the direction of him and the sapling, than he was seized with such a sudden panic as to cause him to grasp the sapling in his arms and start up it, though, owing to want of practice, with hardly the agility of a squirrel. After a tremendous effort, he succeeded in reaching a fork some ten feet from the ground, where he seated himself, and awaited the issue of events.

It didn't last long to wait. The furious barking of the dog soon aroused the inmates of the cabin. Scarcely a minute had elapsed after the professor had succeeded, by almost superhuman exertions, in seating himself comfortably in the fork of the sapling, out of reach of the dog, when the door of the cabin opened and a large six-footer of a backwoodsman, somewhat adly attired, with a long rifle in his hand, emerged therefrom.

"What you got that, Bull?" said the man, as he approached the sapling, at the foot of which the dog was barking vociferously. "What is it, old feller?" he continued. "Bar, painter, or carnamout?"

Bull's response was an abortive attempt to climb the tree, accompanied by a furious outburst of barking.

"Be quiet, old feller," said the man. "We'll soon see what it is," at the same time raising his rifle to his shoulder.

"Hold on there!" shouted the professor, who was beginning to realize the perilous position in which he was placed, and the imminent danger he was in of being shot for a bear or a carnamout. "I am no varmint, I'm Nicodemus Squab, professor of orthography in the Skunkville district school."

"Hello!" said the backwoodsman, as he lowered his rifle. "Is that so? Well, that gives me. What in thunder is you doin' up there?"

"Wait till I get down and I'll tell you," and crawling out of the crotch in which he had been seated the professor slid down the sapling, when he soon succeeded in explaining matters to the satisfaction of that thirty-clad backwoodsman and his savage bulldog.

It was now broad daylight, and when he reached Skunkville the sun was some distance above the horizon, climbing upward toward the zenith.

Of course, every man, woman and child in the place beheld, with wonder-depleted countenances, the advent of the mud-begrimed, hatless professor, and a thousand conjectures were indulged in as to the cause of his singular appearance.

The professor was disposed to be reticent on the subject, answering interrogatories in relation to the matter evasively, but the joke was too good to be kept, and in less than twenty-four hours his approach toward any crowd was greeted by a broad grin overreaching the countenances of a majority of the members thereof, and his departure signaled by a low guffaw.

This conduct on the part of the citizens annoyed the professor considerably at first; then it grew monotonous and he became disgusted.

Finally he burst into a flame of indignation, and after taking his revenge out of the hides of the pupils, especially Mose Howard and his confederates, the irate professor shook the dust of Skunkville from off his feet and he took himself to parts unknown.—New York Weekly.

**A Microscopic Land Question.**

The exact adjudication of an extraordinary land suit brought in the District Court of Colombo, Ceylon, would probably give to each share claimed a blade of grass or a grain of sand. Eight men are suing some eighteen others for a partition of a piece of waste land nine acres in extent. The various shares to be allotted to each necessitates the resolution of the parcel into 18,184,309 shares. The plaintiff naively adds that a partition is impracticable, and desires an order for the sale of the land and the division of the purchase money among the various co-owners. Even that will be an operation involving much perplexity, as the Ceylon currency does not admit of reckoning on a scale of millions of a cent. Mr. Proctor Pedris filed proxy for some of the defendants, and asked a fortnight to file answer. He was promptly given the whole fortnight in view of the extraordinary calculations he will have to get through in the meanwhile.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

**Only Gloom Ahead.**

The winter has been unusually severe, and the lake from which the Ice company gathered its crop was frozen to a much greater depth than usual.

"I suppose, colonel," remarked a citizen to the president of the company one cold morning, "that you won't charge us so much for our ice next summer as you did last. You're getting a tremendous crop."

"We may have to charge more," stifferly replied the president. "Think of the trouble and expense involved in cutting ice three feet thick!"—Youth's Companion.

**Perfidious Man! Foolish Maiden!**

The North China Daily News reports the case of a Chinese maiden who, being jilted by the young man to whom she was engaged, broke the engagement ring into fragments and swallowed them. A few hours later she was dead.

# FOR WOMAN'S BENEFIT

THE RIGHT KIND OF A WIFE

She Sometimes Makes a Man of a Ne'er-Do-Well.

He is the most sociable soul on Main street, and he beamed on the girl in the white shoes who pattered toward him as he stood in the doorway of his little shop.

"His stock in trade in sea shells with 'Souvenir of Seacrest' inscribed on them, pocketbooks made of mussel shells, mirrors framed in shells like the one in David's bedroom when he went to visit the Peggottys, and other more or less marine articles of bigotry and virtue."

The summer girl stood idly gazing at the fanciful wares in the sweetgrass basket at the door while the shopkeeper took leave of a customer. As the latter went down the village street the communicative shopkeeper said to the summer girl, "A powerful smart man, that!" The girl looked after the retreating figure of the "smart" man. He didn't look the part. She smiled indignantly at the shopkeeper and thus encouraged the worthy seller of shells continued:

"Why, I can remember when he was a poor boy—not so many years ago either. He was no 'count whatever—absolutely. One day he had the nerve to get married. We all kind of pitied the girl. But—" and he made a gesture that might mean horror, astonishment or joy, or all three. "How she pulled him up! She made him work; and when he did work he was smart. He wrote and he lawyered and he clerked, and she kept a-tuggin' away at him all the time and saved his money and sent the children to school and dressed herself neat and made his home a very pleasant place."

"A wonderful woman," said the summer girl with a glance into the gloomy little shop.

"Yes, she was. He was lucky. Most women couldn't do a thing with a no 'count fellow like him, but he got a treasure out of Providence's grab-bag, didn't he?"

"It seems so."

"And it tell you that a man's fortune is his wife. She makes him or breaks him."

"She usually tries to break him," said said the summer girl unsmilingly.

"Many a fellow that starts out of some use in the world is dragged down and out by a silly, airy woman. But a good, economical wife is as good as parties and savings banks."

"Parties?"

"Why, she keeps a man home and leads him out of dissipations such as shows and theatres and circuses and balloon ascensions. But I tell you it's better to have any wife—even a silly one—than to have none at all. Plunge in and trust to luck, say I."

"Yes, I think so, too. There's something pathetic about a dried up, selfish bachelor. How about your wife?" asked the summer girl interestedly.

The seller of seashells' round, rubicund face took on lines of wistfulness. He dropped his jocular tone and said gently: "Well, you see, it was a long while ago. She was very young and gay. I suppose people would say—did say—that she was not the kind to help a man in business, but she made me very happy. She only lived a year, but I never forget that happy year. That's why I advise young men to 'plunge in,' and he smiled a little nastily.

And as the summer girl's white shoes went tripping down the street, she looked back at the rotund proportions and bald head of the prosaic figure in the doorway and told herself that one can never tell where romance will choose to take up its abode.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

**Points in Fashionable Millinery.**

The high crown remains a popular style, in straw as well as in lace, chiffon and tulle. In almost every instance the brim is wide all around, with a slight flare off the possibilities, and tips offer manifold facilities in the adornment of high-crowned hats.

The revival of the little bonnet with strings will undoubtedly become more general as the season advances. Gosamer materials and straw braids are used to fashion them, and ostrich tips, lace and sequins form the decoration, with the strings usually of velvet ribbon. The youthful lace looks especially well under a flat plateau or the new sailor with very low crown and rather wide brim, though either shape may be varied by rolling back the brim on one or both sides or by rising it with a bandeau. For those who have tired of straw there are the smartest hats in white, gray or fawn felt, with a simple ribbon or scarf trimming. Velvet ribbon in widths varying from half an inch to two inches is much in demand in the millinery world. The broad widths are used to form the quillings that encircle the low crowns of the new sailors, as well as for bows and rosettes. Both fruit and flowers are to be popular decorations for the early autumn hat, and in the reds, deep greens and serene brown shades they are particularly seasonable. Birds, too, are used and are admirably suited to the present flat style of trimming.—The Delineator.

**Walking as an Exercise.**

No one need complain she cannot take exercise, so long as she can walk.

Mayhap, one cannot afford expensive apparatus within the house, or golf, tennis, or other games without.

But walking is free to all, and Nature yields bountifully of her charms to those who will study them.

A walk, even if it be a short one, is a wonderful rejuvenator to the tired housewife, the toiler in store or factory. And this is the season of all seasons to take them.

Leave your cares and worries at home. It will do you no good if you carry with you the problem how Ben's suit will get made, or how you can afford to get Mamma a new dress.

Drop all these. Open your mind to the beauty of the wayside flowers, the play of light and shade in the wilderness of green leaves, the loveliness of

tackle home problems with a much clearer brain when you return.

Begin with short walks and moderate pace. Don't go home exhausted. Remember there are tasks to perform when you get there.

Many a woman has returned from a walk so tired that she was "ready to drop." And that settles walks for her for all time.

Wear comfortable shoes, short skirts, and loose, easy clothing. You will tire yourself unnecessarily if you must hold up a skirt. Besides, you come out to enjoy Nature, not to think of your clothes.

The shoes, above all things, should be comfortable, for a "marching man is only as strong as his feet."

Do not try to keep step with your companion if it is an effort. Any but your natural gait will tire you quickly.

Hold your chest well up, and take deep breaths. Thus will you get the greatest physical good from your expedition.

And if kept up regularly, you will find a vast improvement in your health before a month is out.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

**How to Talk to Women.**

In America, writes a feminine contributor to the Contemporary Review, though the women have not as yet voted, except in a few States, they have attained a different social position from that which we hold in England, and, consequently, an American man talks up to us, very visibly taking it for granted that we know as much and have as good a judgment of the subject in hand as himself.

An Englishman, on the contrary, usually talks down to us. He assumes that we know little or nothing, and that our opinions if we have any are hardly worth ascertaining. This he does pretty universally to ladies who are strangers to him. Only if he happens to know that the woman to whom he is speaking is the possessor of brains he is apt to treat her in a still more aggravating manner, and to imply, in all he says, that she is not as other women are. "Fools and slight," but stands apart from her sex—a very great insult, as we must all consider it.

After a certain number of years of the new regime I am convinced that the minds of women would grow larger and stronger, even as their bodies have done in the last forty years, by fresh air and exercise, and then a generation will arise in which women will scarcely be called any longer the "weaker sex."

**The Three-Hole Blucher.**

The fittest of soles is seen on some walking boots, both buttoned and laced, and on the popular oxford or low-cut shoe except the "three-hole blucher." From the ball of the foot, beneath the instep and to the heel, there is a heavy curved support to the foot, with unusual "spring" to it. The heel is high, and for some reason called a military heel. This blucher has three holes on each side, no more, and therefore, is truly a low shoe.

It has no lip across the toes, neither pointed nor square, and the sole lies flat and square on the ground, not in the least turning up at the toes, as older style boots and shoes are wont to do. By these marks you may know the "three-hole blucher."

**Storm Coat in Scottish Tartan.**

A stylish storm coat or traveling wrap for cold weather is of mixed dark blue and green plaid, the veritable Scotch tartan woven with a cheviot surface. The garment completely envelops the figure and falls in a series of three capes. The shoulder cape comes below the waist, the next comes like a descent to the knees and the third falls to the hem of the skirt. All the pieces are finished with three rows of machine stitching in black silk. The garment is fastened with gilt ball buttons all the way down in front.

**Newest Fashions**

Pleated boleros are wonderfully becoming to slender forms.

Some sashes are broad enough to cover the back of the skirt.

Embroidered sashes of satin Liberty are rounded off at the ends.

Mohair is one of the smartest fabrics, because it hangs well.

Summer evening fans are airy fairy weapons to match the dress.

Cape collars finish various jackets and broaden narrow shoulders.

Shaped clasps for the back of the belt should be correctly shaped.

La Valliere necklaces adorn the neck of the woman in the low or half-low gown.

A rose wreath is a lovely garniture for a décolleté dress of softly rosy pink.

Heavy chateleine pins have a way of disagreeably sagging on very thin goods.

The cut and fit of underwear is important if one desires perfect-fitting clothes.

Some handsome dresses boast made sashes that have ends not over a foot in length.

Some stitches in modish embroidery can only be appreciated through a magnifying glass.

Heavy sashes to match the dress, such as velvet, are effectively finished at the scallop-shaped ends with heavy fringe.

A veiling novelty is on the order of thin crepe de chine furnished with a border in fancy cut-stitch forming diamonds. This veiling comes in all colors.

Lilies are among the fashionable flowers for hat decoration. White, blue and purple blossoms are combined in large wreaths and placed around the trim of straw hats.



FOR THE FAIR

LATEST NEW YORK FASHIONS

New York City.—Long coats make a feature of the latest styles and can be relied upon as correct both for the present and for the future. This one, dust off, when you are at your journey's end, will be appreciated by those who have made a rushing auto trip with a veil tied on that blows out of position, or a veil which is part of the trimming of a hat, and so cannot well be freed from particles of dust without taking the piece of millinery apart.

**Styles in Winter Millinery.**

Lovely petunia and fuchsia nuances and magentas are promised in winter millinery. These tints are beautiful and highly decorative, but not every one can wear them. The decided blonde, alike with the decided brunette, has difficulty in assimilating them, and they seem to be especially planned for the accommodation of the natural-toned woman. She of the medium dark brown hair, medium skin and distinctive brown eyes generally carries them off successfully; therefore, as this style of woman is in the majority, one may look for a fuchsia and petunia cut.

**Silk Shoe Laces With Tassels.**

English walking boots are not ill buttoned. Some are truly laced close to the little foot, displaying the neat contour of the ankle. The boots are laced up with extra long laces, thirty inches in length. The laces end apparently in tin tags, but after they are drawn through the last eyelet the tags are pulled off, disclosing silk tassels which look quite smart and give a feminine air to the stout walking boots, which are made upon a masculine model.

**The Shoulder Ruche.**

In order to give the fair maid the proper width across the shoulders (which is intended to set off her slenderness below the waist), sleeve trimmings droop lower and lower on the shoulder, and medallions of lace and plucked-out ruchings of taffeta or lousine silk are frequently placed as a shoulder decoration.

**A Fall Outing Costume.**

An ultra-smart outing costume for the fall is of navy serge, the fine but rough quality of goods being chosen in preference to the smoother finish. The skirt is perfectly plain in front, fits exquisitely over the hips, and falls in an inverted box pleat behind. The jacket is tight-fitting, the front tur-

ned by May Manton, is essentially smart and is shaped to take the outlines of the figure without being over snug. As shown it is made of khone blue cheviot, stitched with corticelli silk, and makes part of a costume, but the design is equally appropriate for the separate coat and for all sitting and coat materials.

The coat is made with fronts that are put in three sections, back, side backs and under-arm gores, and so allows of the many seams that mean perfect fit as well as vertical lines and apparent slenderness of figure. The neck is finished in regulation coat style and the fronts lap over to be buttoned in double-breasted fashion. The sleeves are the accepted ones that are without fullness above the elbows, but form puffs at the wrists and are finished with flare cuffs.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is six and a quarter yards twenty-seven inches wide, three and a half yards forty-four inches wide or three and a half yards fifty-two inches