

Patton Courier.

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1895.

The Patton Courier,

The Largest Paper in Southern Georgia.

MAY BE SINGING FISHES.

A Phenomenon of the Sea Which Is Inter-
esting and Mysterious.

Here is an account of a phenomenon of the Pascagoula river in Mississippi, to which, although it is not generally known, the attention of naturalists has been called on account of its mystery. At times very remarkable sounds are heard at the mouth of this river. The local fishermen say that it is "the spirits singing under the water." It is a murmuring sound, which rises gradually and then falls to a lower tone. The music ceases when the waters are disturbed, and when they are quiet it begins again.

Several explanations have been offered as to the origin and cause of the mysterious sounds of the Pascagoula. The most satisfactory theory is that the sounds are produced by a species of fish in some unknown way. Professor G. Brown Goode, who is an authority on fishes and fish life, thinks that the death-fish may cause the sounds in question.

Instances of peculiar sounds being heard at sea and ascribed to fishes are not uncommon, as the following examples will show.

In 1824, when Lieutenant White of the American navy was at the mouth of a river in Cambodia, he and his crew were surprised by unusual sounds. He described the noise as a ringing of the bells of an organ, the ringing of bells, the rattling of a harp, and the tones of an immense harp. The natives said that the sounds were produced by a school of a certain kind of fish.

Dr. Bull, U. S., reported that a party of people in a boat on the waters near Bombay heard strange sounds, which the natives said to be caused by fish. The well known English traveler, Sir J. Emerson Tennent, heard similar sounds from the lake of Batticaloa in Ceylon, and here again the natives claimed that fishes made the sounds. Several correspondents of newspapers have reported having heard sounds which were produced by fishes. One writer in the London Field, 1867, avers that in the harbor at Greytown, Nicaragua, he was haunted at night by these mysterious sounds. Another in the same paper tells of musical sounds which he heard in the Tiber river. Other instances of more recent date might be mentioned.

From all the accounts given we may draw some interesting conclusions. Thus it seems that the sounds are almost always heard on shipboard, though Charles Kingsley once heard them at Trinidad from the shore; that they are usually heard in tropical regions; that they are more often heard at night than at any other time; that they are commonly heard at the mouth of rivers, as at the mouth of the Pascagoula; and that they have been reported from the coast of Java, in Australia, Japan, and Asia.—Our Natural History.

The most cultivated minds are usually the most patient, most exact, most rationally progressive, most free from all accessory details.—James Hartwood.

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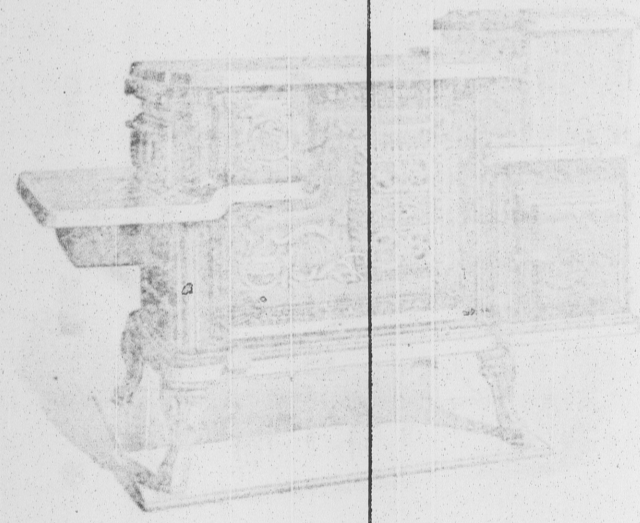
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