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## GAME-FISHES OF THE FLORIDA REEF.



NETS FOR MULLET.

IN northern waters, where streams are whipped with fantastic and artificial flies, the bait-catcher is comparatively an unimportant personage. The possession of certain grim secrets regarding the haunts of live bait is his sole claim upon the angler, and the most fervent votary of the rod and line would scarcely clothe him with professional dignity, or view him in the light of a picturesque feature of the general surroundings.

Such, however, are the attributes of our bait-catcher of the outer reef. Tall, blithe, prolific of speech, wit, and humor, Paublo strides along—the ideal fisherman of the Keys. He nods recognition to the passing pelican; the laughing gulls utter their shrill ha-ha at his call; and all the secrets of the reef are his. The feeding-grounds of the mullet and the hardhead, the lurking-places of the tarpon, the great coral heads about which the gray snapper loves to hide, the deep lairs of the barracuda and the kingfish—all are familiar to this dark confidant of nature.

Over one arm is slung a cast-net, while in the other hand he bears a long two-pronged pair of grains. As he moves along the white coral sands, which send out a metallic ring, his keen eye scans the reef in search of the rippling mullet, while from his ample lips rise melodious strains, the music of intuition.

Following the jovial bait-catcher are two patrons of the rod and line, one a disciple of the rod and reel in all contingencies, the other a claimant for the recognition of the experts of the hand-line and grains—at least as exempli-

fied among the Florida Keys. Each is provided with the tackle of his choice—hand-lines with long copper wire leaders, and a heavy bass rod with massive reel. Evidently a test of merit is to be the outcome of the day's sport.

The fishermen were wending their way along the shores of Long Key, a narrow strip of coralline sand about a mile in length and one hundred feet in width, which formed with Garden Key the center of the Dry Tortugas group, the key of the Gulf, one hundred and twenty miles from the mainland of Florida. The sun was well up, and as far as the eye could reach the blue waters of the Gulf stretched away like a sea of glass. The divide between water and sky was lost in the perfect stillness, and even the *Physaliæ* were becalmed, and floated listlessly, their fairy sails raised to their utmost tension. Far to the north Sand, Middle, and East keys rested on the glassy surface like white gulls, their tops capped with green vestures of live oak and mangrove. To the right Bush Key, with its ragged trees and pelican nests, seemed to hang in mid-air, and here began the great sea-wall, or half-submerged reef, that swept away for miles to the south, surrounding coral groves and deeply cut channels of vivid blue—the paradise of the fisherman.

A motion of the bait-catcher caused a halt, and in the direction of his pointed finger, about thirty feet from shore, were seen a few ripples and a dark shadow-like spot on the white reef.

"Dey 's too sizable fo' castin'," he said. Dropping the net, he seized the spear and cautiously waded towards the school until waist deep; then placing the butt of the long grains in his palm, he hurled it not at the fish but high into the air. The pole rose like an arrow until it reached an altitude of thirty feet, then, hovering for a second over the spot, it turned

and fell prongs downward into the school, the waving handle telling of the execution done.

"Disher 's de only way to cotch ole fool mullets," said Paublo, as he waded inshore with one of the large fish impaled on the grains. "Ef yo' throw de grains at 'em, dey kinder casts dere eyes up and scoots off; but dey can't see nuthin' comin' down."

More bait having thus been secured, the fishing-ground was soon reached—a spot where the channel approached so closely that a diver could dash headlong from the beach into blue water, and so clear that for fifty feet the smallest objects were discernible. Here a school of sardines hugged the shore, and in the greater depths a large black sting-ray was seen moving gracefully along with the birdlike motion of its kind.

"Yo' ain't gwine to fish fo' tarpon wif disher machine, is yo'?" asked Paublo, picking up



FISHING FOR TARPON.

the colonel's heavy bass rod and looking at it with an expression of disgust.

"I 'm going to try," replied the latter.

"Yo' 'd better shake hands, sah, wif dat pole den; it 's good-by, shore 's yo' born, ef dat ole tarpon dat I see yere las' evenin' makes up his mind to take hol'," said Paublo.

"The rod has already been tested," rejoined the colonel with a laugh. "At Indian River, up the coast, I killed a six-foot tarpon with it, though it took me over two hours, and during most of the time the fish was towing the boat about."

"Dat ain't from de shore," argued Paublo, who looked upon the rod and reel as mere impediments to a display of skill, which to him was in capturing large fish with small lines, in making a barracuda take a bait against its will, in urging it on by a dexterous manipulation of the line that aroused its ire and cupidity, and in making a dead mullet simulate a living one, though on the end of a leader a hundred feet away.

"Tarpon set dat wheel afire," he continued, as the colonel reeled up the line. "Dere ain't no slackin' off; it 's jes let go, haul when yo' git de chance, let go, an' haul. No, sah! Yo'

can't wind eight-foot tarpon on no wheel; 'deed yo' can't."

Notwithstanding this discouragement the colonel prepared his line, which was of extra length, a heavy copper wire twenty inches long connecting the hook with it; and having baited with a mullet by passing the hook through the mouth, out at the gills, and then into the tail, made his cast of eighty feet or more into the channel.

Meanwhile Paublo had unwound a grayish blue line, with a long, slender wire attached, and, whirling it about his head, dropped his bait one hundred feet out; then making the end of the line fast to an oar driven into the sand, he complacently fell upon his back, raised one bare foot over his knee, took a single turn with the line about his big toe, as a tell-tale, and apparently fell asleep. For a time the fates seemed unpropitious, and the soldier-crabs, whose domain had been invaded, had recovered from their alarm and were crawling over the prostrate fisherman, when he suddenly ejaculated, "Tarpon 's nosin' round yo' bait, sah," and forthwith the colonel's line was seen trembling violently; then a yard or more was unreeled with a jerk, followed by a lull. Again it started into activity, rushing out with incredible speed. The rod was raised firmly; the line came taut with a singing sound, hurling the crystal drops into the air; and the fish was hooked.

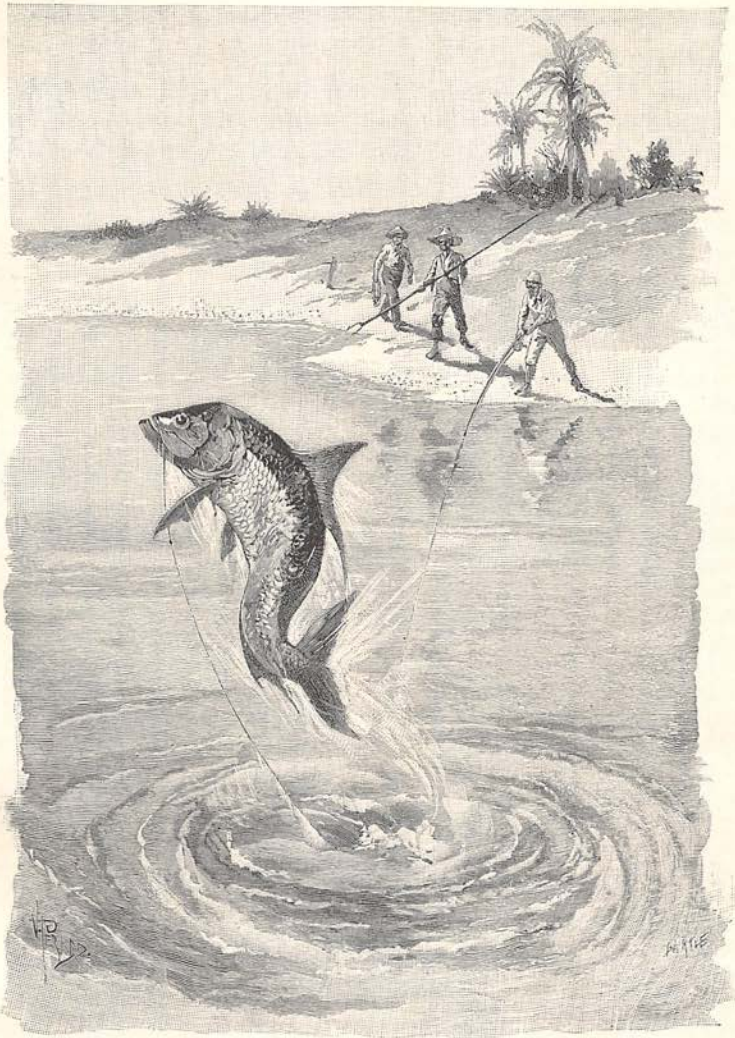
Then came a response that would be a revelation to the uninitiated. The rod was almost wrenched from the colonel's hands, and seventy feet from the key rose the king of fishes, a magnificent tarpon fully six feet in length. For a second it blazed in the sun, a dazzling flash of silvery light, then fell with a thundering crash.

Imagine a fish of this size, resembling a gigantic shad, with the life and activity of a bluefish, its enormous scales below the median line a solid mass of silver, as if the molten metal had been poured upon them—this was the game the bass rod had to deal with. "He 's makin' dat wheel buzz," said Paublo. Both he and the judge had hauled in their lines, and stood by to watch the trial of skill and strength.

The line was rapidly being exhausted, the fish making a straight dash of two hundred feet, carrying the fisherman down to the water's edge and almost into the channel. The colonel now firmly passed the point of the rod to the right, a move that resulted in turning the direction of the fish upshore.

"Dat 's good, sah; dat 's it," shouted Paublo, quick to acknowledge the skill and coolness of the fisherman. "Ef yo' kin keep him up an' down de beach, yo' kin do it."

The two were now running up the key, the



TARPON-ANGLING.

colonel gaining on the line, reeling it in slowly, and anon slacking out to save the rod. In theory the fish was to be brought gradually inshore, perhaps half a mile above, where it could be reached with the grains, and in pursuance of this plan a running fight was kept up for a quarter of a mile along the key, the strain becoming momentarily greater, until suddenly the great fish rose again high above the surface. For a second the line slackened as the fish turned inshore, but before it could be reeled in the gamy tarpon again turned, and with a great burst of speed rushed directly from the beach. No rod could withstand this manoeuvre. The rod was lowered until it was in effect a mere hand-line; the reel was singing an ominous strain; and a moment later the line ran out, taking the fisherman deep into the water, where a stand had to be made that snapped

the line, the great fish dashing away towards the distant channel.

To guard against a repetition of this the dinghy was brought to the fishing-ground, and while the colonel renewed his tackle the others cast their lines again, Paublo reclining as before upon the sand with the line between his toes. A slight twitching soon brought him to his feet. Glancing to see that everything was clear behind, he checked the running line. It quickly became taut, and with a steady strain he sounded the fish. For a single second there was a lull; then a rush of line, a flurry of sand about the coil, and one hundred feet away rose a flashing tarpon at least six feet long.

Now followed a display of hand-line fishing worthy of the name. The line was fairly hissing through the bait-catcher's hands. Dexter-

ously coiling the slack, he stepped from side to side, now taking advantage of a lull and hauling in with marvelous rapidity, slacking again, running up the beach or in the water, adding his weight cautiously to tire the fish, all the motions being conducted with a swiftness and skill that fully matched the efforts of the great game.

The method of working up the key was tried, but so furious were the rushes of the fish that it was found impracticable. The dinghy was launched, and the fishermen leaped in, and a moment later were speeding up the channel behind the gamy steed. The line was now placed in a notch in the bow and gradually taken in, until finally, after a long struggle, during which the boat was towed over near a neighboring key, the great fish was brought within reach of the grains and despatched. Beaching the dinghy, a wisp of rope was passed through the tarpon's gills, and, raising it as far as its great length would allow, the herculean bait-catcher moved away up through the line of palm-trees, fairly covered by the noble fish.

The tarpon is the *Megalops atlanticus* of naturalists, a member of the family *Elopidae*, and may be considered a gigantic herring. They have a wide geographical range from the extremity of the Florida reef to Cape Cod, two specimens having been captured in the latter locality in 1874. From May to September they are extremely common in the northern streams of Florida, seeking the warmer waters of the reef and the more southern inlets during the winter. Large ones are the rule, averaging one hundred and fifty pounds in weight and from five to seven and a half feet in length, while their maximum length is said to be over eight feet, and their weight three hundred pounds. The smallest specimen observed in the St. John's River, according to a careful observer, weighed sixty-eight pounds, and its capture was effected in a manner that illustrates the agility of the species. It leaped aboard the steamer *Water Lily*, clearing the guards, and landing fairly in the captain's lap, who was sitting in a chair in the middle of the forward deck.

"You anglers," said the judge that evening, "who can cast a fly delicately upon the surface eighty or ninety feet with a five-ounce rod, or one hundred feet with a two-pound salmon rod, are apt to think that in this you have all attainable skill, and are not inclined to listen to the hand-liner. In point of fact, the fishes of

the reef possess game qualities that are not surpassed in any waters, and I will match a thirty-pound barracuda against a salmon of equal weight on any point. While your salmon is sulking in a hole, the barracuda will fight until you have him in the boat; and to present a rod to such a fish is an insult to its intelligence," added the hand-line advocate, warming up to his subject.

The colonel was in the minority. He had been discovered by Paublo endeavoring vainly to lure a gray-snapper with a silver doctor that he considered very killing, and was disposed to admit that rod-fishing, with either fly or bait, was not exactly adapted for the fishes of the reef.

"It's my impression," he said, "that the gray-snapper will not take bait on any tackle."

"Big gray-snappers offshore take craw-fish," said Paublo, who had brought up the measurement of the tarpon's large scales, which was three and a fourth by three and a half inches. "But disher quality snapper roun' de Keys dey's got heap o' sense."

"But," said the colonel, "I saw one rise to a live fly this morning that fell on the surface."

"Dat's only play, sah," replied Paublo. "Dey ain't gwine to eat feddery, dat's shore."

Disher inshore quality snappers knows jes as much as folks—long as dey see de line dey ain't gwine to git cotched; but dey's kinder out-o'-sight out-o'-mind fish, an' ef yo' kin hide de line dere yo' is."

To illustrate this theory the next day Paublo took a saber made out of an iron barrel-hoop, and during a few moments' execution along shore secured forty or fifty small fishes that he termed hardheads, resembling sardines. He then brought out a line of a faded blue tint, about the size of a mackerel-line, to which he attached the hook by a delicate copper wire three feet in length, no sinker being used. The hardheads were then strung upon the hook through their eyes,—as many as could go on,—and tossed over, sinking in water perhaps eight fathoms deep, and distinctly visible when on the bottom.

The snappers were passing and repassing in great numbers from an old wreck a short distance away, and if the term dignity may be applied to a fish it was applicable to them. Every motion was one of grace, and as they swept along in groups, many ranging in length from two to three and a half feet, they presented an imposing spectacle. For some time the bait remained unnoticed, but the fisherman



TAKING HOME THE TARPON.

gave a tremulous movement to the line that in turn was imparted to the bait, and a passing snapper stopped, turned its tail gracefully, and moved half around the shining bait.

"He's lookin' fo' de line," whispered Paublo;

ing in on the line and then darting swiftly out, trying manœuver and trick in rapid succession, only to be met by the bait-catcher at every move, and finally drawn exhausted upon the sands.



SPEARING A BARRACUDA.

"but dere ain't no line dere," he added, as if talking to the fish.

"But he 's gone," said the colonel, as the fish turned away.

"Jes gwine to see ef anybody 's lookin'," was the reply.

A moment later the fish was back again. It hovered over the tempting bait, bending its body in graceful curves, now nosing it as it quivered under the skilful hands of the fisherman, and finally, after another brief disappearance, it returned, quickly seized the bait, and moved away. A moment later the shining hard-heads had vanished; a side jerk, and the line was flying through the negro's hands, cutting the water with the sound so intoxicating to the enthusiast. Careful treatment was now necessary to prevent a broken line, the great fish seeking cover, rushing from side to side, com-

"I have caught the red-snapper with rod, trolling," said the colonel, as the judge pronounced the fish the *Lutjanus caxis*, the finest table-fish on the reef.

"Dat 's up de coast," interrupted Paublo, with a grin. "Dey ain't got no call to come yere. I cotch red-snapper wif pork an' lead sinker ten miles off de banks at Fernandiny. Come up like a heap o' coral. Dey ain't game, sah; dey ain't got no sense, jes like grouper an' jew-fish. But de gray-snapper," he continued, laying the graceful creature with its mild, beautiful eyes before the fishermen, "dey 's got sense jes like folks, dey is."

"If you wish to see some of our native talent with the grains," said the judge one morning, "go out with Chief and watch him take a barracuda."

Chief was the only professional fisherman,



TOWED BY A BARRACUDA.

with the exception of Paublo, on the Keys—a full-blooded Indian, a Seminole, one of the last of his tribe. A man of few words, his simple invitation to the judge to tumble in was accepted without comment. The craft was a small, light twelve-foot boat of wide beam, known as a dinghy, the Indian propelling her with a single oar, sculling with great dexterity.

Across her beam lay a pole thirteen feet in length, upon which was fitted a two-pronged iron spear, or grains, with automatic barbs, a stout line being attached, and coiled at the sculler's feet.

Reaching the head of a channel that extended east and west of the key, the dinghy was put about and headed against the sun, the tall figure of the fisherman standing upright, slowly managing the oar with his left hand, anon glancing astern and on each side. When half-way up the channel the long right arm picked up the grains, and, silently turning the pole parallel with the boat, the fisherman looked around and nodded significantly to his passenger, who rose and observed a large black eye, a sharp muzzle, and then the entire form of a narrow, shapely fish about five feet long following them some thirty feet astern. Now swerving to one side, then to the other, the gliding oar seemed to offer an irresistible attraction to the fish. A quickened motion on the part of the Indian, and the barracuda shot ahead, apparently oblivious of the presence of the boat; then as if alarmed, it turned

upon its side in the glare of the sunlight full upon the surface. Releasing the oar, the sculler quickly grasped the grains with both hands, and, leaning far back, with a swaying motion hurled it with unerring accuracy at the victim. The shock released the pole from the iron; a sounding splash, and the line was rushing out with the welcome hiss, the imperturbable fisherman standing erect, motionless, and silent as before. One hundred feet of line out, the pole was picked up, and the running line that was attached to the bow tossed over.

In a moment the light craft was dashing away after the gamy barracuda, with bow under, and hurling the water from her sides. Up the channel the fish rushed, and only after a quarter of a mile of frantic endeavor did it show signs of exhaustion. Then the line was taken in hand and slowly brought in. Great bursts of speed, rushes from side to side, and frantic leaps from the water, displayed the gamy characteristics of the noble fish; but by slacking when too taut, taking the slack in quickly, and closely watching every advantage, the barracuda was soon rendered helpless. Once alongside, the tall fisherman stooped and, seizing it deftly by the gills, drew it struggling into the boat. Again headed for the sun, the dinghy was sculled along, to repeat the tragedy twice again. In one of these strikes the grains was hurled thirty feet.

"The shadow," said the judge, as his friend

was relating his experience upon his return, "that you would keep behind you in trout-fishing is no obstacle here, the secret being to arouse the curiosity of the fish by a dexterous handling of the oar while keeping the sun in its eyes. This method, which you see is successful, is peculiar to the Florida reef. The barracuda, though not strictly a surface fish, lies generally three or four feet from it, in wait for the schools of small fry that frequent a similar depth, and to the expert hand-line fisherman it affords rare sport."

From the upper end of Long Key this was demonstrated on another occasion. The reef extended off with clear white sandy bottom in water about four feet deep, and, in walking along, barracudas two or three feet in length were often seen darting seaward.

The judge carried his line, which was similar in color and size to the one used for snapper-fishing, in a large coil over his arm, explaining that it could not tangle, as it had been stretched forty-eight hours at severe tension, and was always stretched moderately after using. The hook was fastened to a slender copper wire two feet in length, and a mullet five inches long being impaled, it was thrown out ahead of the first barracuda sighted.

The splash attracted the notice of the fish, which moved forward; but seeing that the bait was dead, it instantly regained its former motionless position between surface and bottom. Now a quivering motion was imparted to the bait, which seemed struggling to escape, waving to and fro under the adroit manipulation of the fisherman, movements that were not lost upon the watchful barracuda. Dropping its muzzle, it sank slowly and gently to the bottom, and moved imperceptibly upon the bait, creeping upon it as a cat would upon a bird, then backing off as if suspicious. The slightest overdoing of the motion aroused its incredulity, and the clever simulation of life urged it on, until finally it seized the mullet, rose quickly from the bottom, and with quick gulps swallowed it. It was then that the hook struck home, and like a shot the blue-hued fish was high in air, bending and shaking its savage jaws in agony and surprise, and for some moments giving the fisherman ample scope for an exposition of dexterity and skill.

As he brought the fish in the judge remarked, "I myself see no sport in the heavy-sinker, deep-water hand-line fishing, but thus outwitting a gamy fish, where you can watch his every move in the clear water and feel every thrill through the medium of the line, is to me pleasure that I do not obtain from the rod."

"But," urged the colonel, "I could use a rod in a similar way after short practice."

"You forget," replied the judge, laughing

at his friend's persistence, "that the rod that would land an eighty-pound striped bass would not, unless I am greatly mistaken, be a match for a barracuda of equal weight; the action and activity of the fish are entirely different."

It must be admitted, however, in defense of the champion of the rod, that he succeeded later in killing a thirty-pound barracuda, although his season of triumph was of short duration. An early riser, he was often on the reef at sunrise, taking advantage of the dead calms that are so characteristic of the locality, frequently for days not a ripple save that occasioned by the breakers on the barrier reef disturbing the glassy surface. One morning he returned and aroused the judge and Paublo with a magnificent jack nearly two feet long that he had taken with his favorite silver doctor.

"It rose like a salmon," he said exultantly, "and I was thirty minutes in landing it."

"Did you see any others?" asked the judge, with a twinkle of merriment in his gray eye.

"No," replied the jubilant angler; "I was satisfied with this, and it fully demonstrates that the rod has no restrictions."

"Scuse me, sah," said Paublo, who was gang-ing hooks hard by, "but w'en de jacks come, sah, yo' better leave disher pole in de bag."

But the colonel was not to be deterred, and later in the day was standing at the place of his morning's exploit, gracefully whipping the warm waters for a companion jack, his book of flies on the sand. At the stand he had taken the channel was forty feet away, so that the fly was dropped delicately upon its borders at every cast.

The judge and Paublo were a thousand yards up the narrow key endeavoring to secure some live bait with a cast-net, the crash of which, as it fell when hurled by the bait-catcher, being the only sound that broke the stillness of the calm. The fly-fisherman had been casting half an hour with creditable patience, when the others heard a hail, and, turning and hurrying towards him, became laughing witnesses to a most extraordinary spectacle. The colonel was waist-deep in the water, wielding his rod in a manner that would have attracted the attention of the ghost of Walton himself. He held it over his head, now pushing it backward, now down and up, the tip undergoing a tremendous strain, and the rod and caster seemingly involved in indescribable confusion. The water about him appeared to be boiling, as if under the influence of some sudden irruption, while fish from a foot to two and a half feet in length were leaping into the air by thousands, striking his body, dashing over his head and between his legs, and one, which had originally seized the killing fly, had completely

entangled the fisherman in his own line. The confusion grew momentarily greater, the patter of fins and falling fish forming a babel of sounds that could have been heard a mile distant. Millions of small fry packed the water so closely that it was with difficulty the colonel forced his way through them as he struggled towards the shore; the great jacks dashing

fish. As the gulls rose, the watchful man-of-war birds gave chase; and so this curious phase of life continued, finally ceasing as suddenly as it began.

"That," said the judge to the astonished colonel, "is a 'jack-beat.' I knew this morning when you brought one in that they had come. They appear by thousands, I might say millions, rushing out of the channel without warning, chasing large schools of sardines inshore, hemming them in against the beach, and devouring them by the score, and, as you have seen, completely oblivious of danger. From now," continued the judge, "for a month or more, these beats will be of daily occurrence. You can hear a heavy one two miles away."

The minor fishes of the reef that afford fine sport and are excellent food for the table are legion. In the deep waters off the great fringing reef, among the waving lilac, the yellow-tail is found, attaining the size of the weak-fish of the North; for them crawfish bait is used, and in deeper waters the white meat of the great *Strombus gigas*. The lines for all these fishes of deep water are rigged with the hook a foot or more above the sinker, according to the bottom—a method necessary to prevent fouling with the great heads of coral and other forms that cover the areas of this ocean garden.

Various species of the genus *Hemulon*, or grunts, afford fair sport in shallow water, while the cod of northern waters is here replaced by the wide-mouthed grouper, which forms an important article with the Havana trade. The angel and parrot-fishes, with many-hued garb, the somber-colored porgy, the grotesque hogfish, and many more, lend variety and excitement to even the generally doubtful pleasures of deep-water fishing.

The hogfish, usually found in comparatively deep water, was caught by the sportsmen off the great reef at low tide. The dead coral heads, which had been beaten into a wall and formed the hiding-places of innumerable living forms, were partly bare, the water deepening suddenly to the blue depths of the Gulf. Standing on this vantage-ground, bearing the crawfish bait and extra tackle, with the dinghy hauled up in smooth water on the inner side, the fishermen easily threw beyond the gentle breakers into deep water, tenanted with a score of eager fishes whose savage attacks upon the luscious bait only served to draw the greater game. The bite of the hogfish was a steady strain; but the moment the hook was felt it



A JACK-BEAT.

into the school with increasing fury, wild with excitement and seemingly unconscious of their human enemies.

Near the beach for several feet there was a solid mass of small fish, and as the demoralized fisherman neared the shore the jacks had preceded him, and were leaping upon the sands, the pattering of their silvery bodies and the laughter of his companions adding to his amazement and discomfiture.

The turmoil, which at first had been confined to his immediate vicinity, spread rapidly up the beach, until for a quarter of a mile the shore was lined with a jumping mass of frenzied fishes that seemed possessed with an uncontrollable desire to hurl themselves upon the sands. The noise from the strange performance soon attracted other observers: gulls came flying from all quarters of the key, dashing into the throng with wild cries; lumbering pelicans fell heavily, and filled their capacious pouches with the smaller fry, and in turn were nipped and then jerked below by the larger





CATCHING A HOGFISH.

became a game-fish worthy of the best efforts of the fisherman. Often were our sportsmen forced amid the breakers in their attempts to drag the highly colored and harlequin-like creature from its home into the still waters of the inner reef. With its enormous mouth the fish has a peculiarly swine-like appearance, fully redeemed, however, by its rich coloring and the long and richly cut dorsal fins and tail. It ranks next to the snapper as a table-fish.

Besides these legitimate features of the reef, there are others whose appearance is not always a cause of congratulation. An enormous fish, locally called the Jew, resembling the *lophius*, is often brought up, threatening to engulf the boat in its capacious maw. A gamy fish seizes the line, and the expectant fisherman finally jerks aboard a veritable porcupine, which rapidly increases in size, assuming gigantic proportions in its inflation. This hedgehog

of the sea is the *Paradiodon hystrix*, and when a specimen two feet in length has assumed round and aldermanic proportions, rolling about the deck like a ball, the victim is often at a loss as to the proper method of removing the encumbrance. Again, the great spotted moray essays the line, fights gamely, is taken for a snapper, and, finally, when hauled into the boat, with open jaws rushes at its captor, who, in one instance, demoralized by the suddenness of the attack, took to the mast, leaving the boat in the possession of the belligerent seaserpent, which ultimately wriggled its way back to its native element.

Withal, the keys of southern Florida offer many inducements and a comparatively new field to the fishermen who care to match their skill with the hand-liners and grainsmen of the outer reef.

C. F. Holder.

## ILLUSIONS.

GO stand at night upon an ocean craft  
 And watch the folds of its imperial train  
 Catching in fleecy foam a thousand glows—  
 A miracle of fire unquenched by sea.  
 There in bewildering turbulence of change  
 Whirls the whole firmament, till as you gaze,  
 All else unseen, it is as heaven itself  
 Had lost its poise, and each unanchored star  
 In phantom haste flees to the horizon line.

What dupes we are of the deceiving eye!  
 How many a light men wonderingly acclaim  
 Is but the phosphor of the path Life makes  
 With its own motion, while above, forgot,  
 Sweep on serene the old unenvious stars!

Robert Underwood Johnson.