

JULIAN HAWTHORNE

"WELL, if this ain't the best show of 'em all!" exclaimed the old lady from the inland district, beside whom I had been standing. She repeated the remark several times before the "show" was over, and I entirely agreed with her.

We were out at the end of the long pier, five hundred yards seaward from the board walk. With the rest of the spectators we were drawn up in a hollow square, four deep, and at least a thousand strong. The rectangular space which we enclosed was some thirty yards on a side, and it contained a tumultuous piece of the Atlantic Ocean and about a hundred thousand fishes, all alive and kicking.

In fact, the end of the pier—a broad, square platform, raised five times a man's height above high-water mark—has this great four-sided hole cut in it, and a huge fish net is fitted to the hole. The net has only one entrance, very narrow, on the landward side, which is the apex, so to say, of long lines of diverging nets opening out right and left from it. The fish of outer spaces are guided by these net-walls into the "pound," and during twenty-three hours of the twenty-four in they come, singly or in battalions, and cannot find their way out again. The approaches to the fatal enclosure may be baited, for aught I know; fishermen are capable of such Ciceronian acts. At night, I am sure, they are lured to their doom by electric lights. All seems fairly well with them, however, until that four and twentieth hour, when their betrayers have fixed at 10:30 o'clock in the morning. They find their quarters uncommonly crowded, to be sure, and their noses are met by a singular interlacement of strings swim which way they will. But the tides of ocean ebb and flow and undulate in the old familiar way, and the innocent creatures are far from realizing the seriousness of their predicament. They swim round and round their prison, doubtless supposing it to be a long wall, which they must turn the flank of at last. But somehow or other the crowd keeps increasing, and those crossed strings have already stretched out scores of miles. It is very odd, and rather tiresome, think the fishes.

I cannot tell this story from the fishes' point of view, however. It is the outlook,

according to the proverb, who sees most of the game. We have been collecting for an hour past, and all the chairs were occupied long ago. Hundreds of people are craning their necks over the precariously-looking structure built up above the level of the pier; if it were to come down, some of us would know how it is ourselves. A young lady's elbow is in the small of my back, but, in her excitement, she is not nearly so much aware of it as I am. Two old farmers, wedged together at my left, are supplying each other with the most amazing information as to nets, fish and marine affairs in general. Accustomed visitors to the place assume an air of fatigued omniscience; but they hold on to their places just the same. Small boys climb down in a manner which gives their female relatives palpitation of the heart. The ancient fishermen, who are managing the show, bear themselves with a certain faintly amused indifference and a serene sense of power. In a minute or two they will begin hauling on the ropes that raise the net, and then you will see fun!

Just now the two famous diving dogs perform their unparalleled feat of diving

net is a foot higher out of water than it was. A fishy commotion answers from within.

This is a particularly favorable morning for the sport, because yesterday was Sunday, when the religious convictions of the fisherman forbid net-hauling, and moreover, the fish, if landed, could not be sold. So there are twice as many impounded as on other days. Besides, yesterday was calm and fine, and there were shoals of porpoise diving and curvetting in the offing, which is not only a sign of fair weather, but of the presence of edible fish. At any rate, the great bag is evidently brim-full, and, as it rises higher and higher, we shall see sights!

From the first, indeed, we have observed

heaved into view. Besides, a fresh southerly breeze is blowing and driving great, foaming rollers through the net, tossing its thronging contents up and down and sweeping them into struggling windrows. The drumfish are getting as much aroused as their sluggish temperaments admit; they flop and pound, and knock the wind out of the hapless lesser fish who happen to lie within reach of their tails. The turtles, whose range of facial expression and bodily gesture is strictly limited, are unable to express acute emotion; they clamber on the backs of their comrades in trouble as opportunity serves, and are in turn overwhelmed and buried out of sight by the latter when a huge wave sweeps hurtling through and dashes everything into

new confusion. And still the impassive fishermen keep on hauling on their ropes and forcing this strange, multiform, glistening, dopping, silvery-brown, striated aggregation into the unwelcome world of air. There is perhaps not much range of character in fish, but we are getting all there is now.

Half an hour's steady work has fetched the net as high as is necessary for the next act in the drama. The "haul" must now be transferred to the tanks or boxes yawning for it on the eastern side of the enclosure.

For this purpose a scoop-net or dredge is brought into play. It is a yard or so in diameter, and about as deep, made fast to a heavy iron ring, and attached to two ropes, the other ends of which are in the hands of two men on opposite sides of the enclosure. It swings out in midair, hovers hawk-like for a moment, and then drops with a side-long splash into the writhing, wriggling mass on the windward side. Thence it is hauled steadily and quickly across the whole breadth of the enclosure, scooping in what ever lies in its path. The operators of the machine, from a due regard to the sensibilities of the spectators, try to so guide its course as to entrap one of the big drumfish; we all bend eagerly forward to watch, and the young lady's elbow aforementioned seems to become twice as sharp as ever. The net half catches the big fellow, but just as he is about to be uplifted skyward a lucky flop throws him out, and down he splashes among his brethren, amid a general shout of sympathetic applause. But a hundred of the smaller fry were snared, and are swung aloft, flashing and flipping, and some of the very smallest are forced through the meshes by the weight of the rest, and drop glittering down. Up swings the dredge, and is seized by outreaching hands above and upser to the tank with a dull, sickening thud. One of the swarthy mariners, standing there with boots midleg high and a snickersee in his hand, gashes with murderous stabs the skates, the dogfish and the other detrimentials, and tosses them out again to expire at their leisure. And down swoops the dredge once more.

Meanwhile one of those incorrigible, heart-breaking boys, bare-legged and capless, has actually climbed down the side of the net, clinging thereto with brown, prehensile toes and fingers, and has setled on half a dozen large weakfish, which had been caught in wrinkles of the net, and is now climbing back again, laden with his spoil. A big wave comes shouldering along, and engulfs him almost entirely, breeches, jacket and all; but it never phases him. Soaked, but triumphant he emerges, fish in hand, and continues his ascent, and now he and his booty are safe ashore. Certainly, as Charles Dudley Warner says, being a boy is a great thing, though I am not sure that it doesn't require practice to make a real success of it.

Oh, these are stirring times! One crowded hour of glorious life like this is worth a world without a scoop-net. The blue Atlantic heaves and foams around us, the salt breeze sings in our ears, the blue heaven is above us. The young lady's elbow seems to have grown incorporate with my spinal process, and the old lady from the inland districts has become inarticulate.

AT ATLANTIC CITY.



ARCHIE STUNN

THE TENNIS GIRL AT ATLANTIC CITY.

the backs of thirty or forty enormous fishes, from three to five feet in length, and looking not unlike bass in figure, which are massed together on the windward side of the net. They are drumfish (so-called), dull, unwieldy creatures, neither gamesters nor toothsome, but nevertheless, by reason of their size, the most sensational feature of the exhibition. They roll over one another, and thrust their great, clumsy mouths against the netting, and flop their tails; if they were tarpon, some of them might jump out. Now and then, too, some large sea turtle, several feet in diameter, forgo to the surface, swimming with

sweeping strokes of their broad flippers, and thrusting out their horny, bird-like heads in fruitless investigation. Yonder, likewise, is a gigantic skate, or stingaree, with his long barbed tail and wide, undulating side fins like wings; he has been caught in a zald of the net, where he flops vainly, sometimes turning upside down, so that we see his white belly and that absurd, human looking mouth opening and shutting. There are a great many of these fellows, but he is the biggest. A long, gray, shark-like dogfish or two also glides to and fro, and there are several hammer-headed sharks, not over two feet in length, grotesque objects, but excellent swimmers, and ugly customers if they were full grown. Meanwhile, as the net is lifted another hitch, we begin to discern a myriad narrow brown backs and flashing silver sides, crowded together in solid ranks and masses, a thousand of them wiggling simultaneously in concentric curves, a thousand pointed noses bumping against the net as one; some of them getting their heads through the interstices, there to be caught by the gills and drown ignominiously; others leaping high in air as the big drumfish charge heavily among them.

Jealousy at Pleasure Bay. One Piazza Maid—I hear that Millie gets her curly hair naturally from her father. Another—I dare say. Somebody said he was a barber.

POINT PLEASANT PLEASURES. An Exciting Yacht Race Divides Interest in the Episcopal Church Fair of St. Mary's-by-the-Sea. Point Pleasant, N. J., August 1.—The most exciting yacht race of the season here took place on Saturday, when the first boats of Point Pleasant raced with those of the Brielle and Manasquan fleets over a ten-mile course. There were two Brielle and two Point Pleasant yachts, and both prizes were captured by the Brielle boats. The challenge cup, which has been held here for two years, was won by the Nanine, Captain George Bailey. The Van, Captain F. O. Bailey, came in second, being two minutes and ten seconds behind the Nanine; the one to win third place was the Ermis, belonging to Captain William Cooke, a prominent New Yorker who is summing here, while the Gettie, owned by Captain Rod A. Clark, was the last in, being twelve seconds behind the Ermis. The Judges were Mr. Charles C. Cooke, of



AT ATLANTIC CITY.

New York, and Mr. Nicholson, of Newark. The race was a very close and interesting one.

Mr. George T. Dudley, of Washington, D. C., is summing at the Lawrence cottage with his family.

The ladies of the Episcopal Church of St. Mary's-by-the-Sea held a fair in the bellevedere of the Leighton on Wednesday afternoon and evening.

Senator Welman, of Brooklyn, with his family, is summing at the Sea View.

Mrs. Hester Byres and the Misses Byres, of New York City, are stopping at the Sonnehelm.

Arrivals at the resort here—P. B. Richardson, Mrs. B. L. Lambert, Mrs. A. M. Platt, Charles H. Dunyan, Mr. and Mrs. S. Spencer Scott, Miss Josephine Scott, P. H. Meade, Fred Y. Yates, Dr. H. G. Norton.

At the Stratford are Mr. and Mrs. R. T. Greene, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph B. Bidger, Miss Lee, Mrs. E. Christine Lumsden, Edward J. Kelly, Mrs. S. J. Bery and Mrs. Katherine Berry.

Beacon-by-the-Sea—E. P. Evans, Edward P. Clark, G. A. Barratoni, H. D. Newson, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas L. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. E. C. Paul.

Leighton—Rev. and Mrs. Thomas G. Lendex, Miss Porter, Miss Bostwick, Marion B. Mattice, William A. Schoonmaker, Robert Dalziel, H. C. Beggs, J. D. Beggs, L. D. Beggs, J. T. Brennan, W. P. Porter.

Stockton—Mr. and Mrs. Samuel J. Graham, Dr. C. M. Hay, Mr. and Mrs. M. Brown, Mrs. Buchanan, Mrs. Percival Heitner, Mrs. Barenore, Mrs. Abel Curtis Hunt, Miss Kathryn Kidder.

BASEBALL AT BAYHEAD.

College Boys Contribute to the Round of Social Gayety at the Bluffs. Bay Head, N. J., August 1.—The college lads who are summing here have formed a baseball nine to play with the teams at the neighboring resorts of Point Pleasant, Spring Lake, etc. This week they have played two games, winning one from Point Pleasant with a score of 17 to 2, and dropping one to Spring Lake with a score of 11 to 5.

A yachting party to Barnegat Inlet in the sloop yacht Clifton was given by Mrs. Howard Clarke, Jr., on Tuesday.

The guests at the Bluffs will give a subscription german this evening in the Bluffs assembly room.

J. A. Frazee, Mr. Schuyler Schifflin, Miss Bartells, Mrs. Temple Bowdoin, Miss Ethel Smith and Miss Lowbor, of New York; Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Fairchild, of New York City, were among the week's guests at the Bluffs.

CONNECTICUT WANTS SILVER.

The seaside hotel keepers in Connecticut and the north shore of Long Island had little hard money this season.