

AN ELECTRIC MONSTER

Flashes of Light and Terrible Sounds Emitted by One in the Bay.

W. L. McDonald Struck Senseless in Attempting to Rescue a Shocked Comrade.

Nearly 150 Feet Long and Covered With Coarse Hair—A Fishing Party's Trip Cut Short.

A party of Tacoma gentlemen have good reason to remember the morning of the 2d of July as long as life remains in their bodies—and to quote the exact words of one of the party, "There are denizens of the ocean that man never, in his most horrible and fantastic nightmare, even saw the likes of."

On Saturday morning a party, composed of the following well known gentlemen, set sail on the sloop "Marion" from the boat house at the end of the wharf for a three days' fishing and hunting excursion on the Sound. The party consisted of Auctioneer William Fitzhenry, H. L. Beal, W. L. McDonald, J. K. Bell, Henry Blackwood and two eastern gentlemen who are visiting the coast, and it is from the lips of one of these gentlemen, who declines to allow his name to be used, as he says that shortly before he left the east he took the Keeley cure, and he fears that if his name was used in connection with this article his eastern friends might think he had "gone back" and got 'em again.

The party were well supplied with all the necessaries of life, as well as an abundance of its luxuries, though it must not be inferred from this fact that the luxuries played any part in creating the sights seen on that memorable morning. Of course, as a person having much respect for truth, I merely chronicle the story as told me, and leave each reader of this remarkable yarn to judge for themselves the necessary amount of credence to give it.

"We left Tacoma," said the eastern man, "about 4:30 p. m., Saturday, July 1st, and as the wind was from the southeast we shaped our course for Point Defiance, intending to anchor off that point and try our luck with rod and line. We cast anchor about 6 o'clock, the wind having died out, and had fair success fishing. The wind coming up again pretty strong Mr. McDonald suggested getting under way for Black Fish bay, Henderson island, as he knew of a fine trout stream running into the bay, and also an excellent camping place near the fishing ground. So about 8 o'clock we weighed anchor and shaped our course for Black Fish bay, which place we reached about 9:30. We landed and made everything snug about the boat and made a nice camp on shore, and as it was by this time 11 o'clock we all turned in to get a little sleep as it was agreed upon that at the first streak of daylight we should all get up. About 100 yards from our camp was the camp of a surveying party, but as it was so late we decided that we would not disturb them but that we would call upon them the following morning, and would probably get some valuable pointers as to the best places to fish and hunt on the island. After a few jokes had been cracked the boys laid down and in a short time everything about camp became as still as death. It was, I guess, about midnight before I fell asleep, but

exactly how long I slept I cannot say, for when I woke it was with such startling suddenness that it never entered my mind to look at my watch, and when after a while I did look at my watch, as well as every watch belonging to the party, it was stopped.

"I am afraid, sir, that you will fail to comprehend how suddenly that camp was awoke.

"Since the creation of the world I doubt if sounds and sights more horrible were ever seen or heard by mortal man. I was in the midst of a pleasant dream, when in an instant a most horrible noise rang out in the clear morning air, and instantly the whole air was filled with a strong current of electricity that caused every nerve in the body to sting with pain, and a light as bright as that created by the concentration of many arc lights kept constantly flashing. At first I thought it was a thunder storm, but as no rain accompanied it, and as both light and sound came from off the bay, I turned my head in that direction, and if it is possible for fright to turn one's hair white, then mine ought to be snow white, for right before my eyes was a most horrible looking monster. By this time every man in our camp, as well as the men from the camp of the surveyors, were gathered on the bank of the stream; and as soon as we could gather our wits together we began to question if what we were looking at was not the creation of the mind, but we were soon disburdened of this idea, for the monster slowly drew in toward the shore, and as it approached from its head poured out a stream of water that looked like blue fire. All the while the air seemed to be filled with electricity, and the sensation experienced was as if each man had on a suit of clothes formed of the fine points of needles. One of the men from the surveyor's camp incautiously took a few steps in the direction of the water, and as he did so the monster darted towards the shore and threw a stream of water that reached the man, and he instantly fell to the ground and lay as though dead.

"Mr. McDonald attempted to reach the man's body to pull it back into a place of safety, but he was struck with some of the water that the monster was throwing, and fell senseless to the earth. By this time every man in both parties was panic-stricken, and we rushed to the woods for a place of safety, leaving the fallen men lying on the beach.

"As we reached the woods the 'demon of the deep' sent out flashes of light that illuminated the surrounding country for miles, and his roar—which sounded like the roar of thunder—became terrific. When we reached the woods we looked around and saw the monster making off in the direction of the Sound, and in an instant it disappeared beneath the waters of the bay, but for some time we were able to trace its course by a bright luminous light that was on the surface of the water. As the fish disappeared total darkness surrounded us, and it took us some time to find our way back to the beach where our comrades lay, and we were unable to tell the time, as the powerful electric force had stopped our watches. We eventually found McDonald and the other man, and were greatly relieved to find that they were alive, though unconscious. So we sat down to await the coming of daylight. It came, I should judge, in about half an hour, and by this time, by constant work on the two men, both were able to stand, and both agree that the moment the water the monster threw touched them, they became immediately unconscious."

On being asked to give some descrip-

tion of the fish, for it was, he said, "an electrical fish," the eastern man said.

"This monster fish, or whatever you may call it, was fully 150 feet long, and at its thickest part I should judge about thirty feet in circumference. Its shape was somewhat out of the ordinary in so far that the body was neither round nor flat but oval, and from what we could see the upper part of the body was covered with a very coarse hair. The head was shaped very much like the head of a walrus, though, of course, very much larger. Its eyes, of which it apparently had six, were as large around as a dinner plate, and were exceedingly dull, and it was about the only spot on the monster that at one time or another was not illuminated. At intervals of about every eight feet from its head to its tail a substance that had the appearance of a copper band encircled its body, and it was from these many bands that the powerful electric current appeared to come. The bands nearest the head seemed to have the strongest electric force, and it was from the first six bands that the most brilliant lights were emitted. Near the center of its head were two large horn-like substances, though they could not have been horns for it was through them that the electrically charged water was thrown.

"Its tail from what I could see of it was shaped like a propeller, and seemed to revolve, and it may be possible that the strange monster pushes himself through the water by means of this propeller like tail.

"At will this strange monstrosity seemed to be able to emit strong waves of electric current, giving off an electro motive force which causes any person coming within the radius of this force to receive an electro tonus. This fish probably receives its power from some submarine cavern of volcanic origin, which owing to its peculiar construction, and having an extra large deposit of copper, it charges the fish that inhabit that region with a strong electric force that is displayed by this peculiar specimen. The peculiar shaped copper like bands may be caused by the strong magnetic force of the fish, and the copper deposits of the ocean, as the strong current would form the copper into a solution, whilst the strong attraction of the fish would naturally form an electric battery, drawing towards it this solution, thus forming deposits on the fish, so that in reality the electric fish is completely encompassed in copper, and its rapid movement through the water is constantly generating frictional electricity, which I should judge would in a measure account for the fish being so constantly and powerfully charged with electricity, though far from its original source of supply. One of the strange characteristics of this fish, and one by which it undoubtedly obtains its food, is its high electric control of dense and foggy atmosphere surrounding it, which amalgamates with the electricity of the fish, making a potential which causes any living creature, such as birds or insects, flying through the air to fall dead into the water. Of course, that is merely a theory, and I may be mistaken as to its origin or where it goes to, but one thing I do know, that I would not encounter the same monster again for the universe

and you can ask the rest of the party and you will find that they all agree with me, that to be within so short a distance of such a terrible monster and yet live to tell the story is something that only happens once in 1000 years. I hardly need to tell you that we were not long in getting under way for Tacoma and I can assure you that I have no further desire to fish any more in the waters of this bay. There are too many peculiar inhabitants in them. I am going to send a full account of our encounter to the Smithsonian Institute, and I doubt not but that they will send out some scientific party to investigate.

"Now I must be going, as I have to leave on to-night's train, but if you need any further particulars you can obtain them from any of the party. No, I do not know who composed the survey party; all I know about them is that they are from Olympia and that they were on the island running farm lines on some disputed land."
