

The Sportsman Tourist.

WE MET BY CHANCE.

IF her flour had not become weevily I should never have met her.

A series of accidents had been apparently especially arranged to prevent such meeting, which had it occurred would probably have been a very common-place event; it was the non-occurrence, taken in connection with the subsequent occurrence, which made a rather singular affair of it.

The lady to whom I have referred as "her," is still to me an "unknown quantity," for as though the series of accidents should be completed, I have lost the memorandum book in which, some eighteen years ago, I very carefully noted down either her name, or that of her husband, the name of the vessel he commanded, for he was a whaling captain, and probably their home address; and said names have as completely left my memory as has the memorandum book my possession. Therefore I can in this story refer to the lady only as "her" or "she," unless indeed, excused by the poverty of our own language to meet such an emergency, I borrow a title from another, and call her Madame; this sounds more respectful, and I will.

There is a vague impression upon my mind that the schooner — hailed from somewhere on Cape Cod, and that between the heel and toe of that boot-shaped peninsula was, and I hope still is, the home of my friend.

In the hope that the far-reaching influence of the FOREST AND STREAM will carry this story to that region, and that it will attract his or her attention, or that of some friend, to whom he or she may have related this story, and that friend, or he or she, will recognize it, and by communicating with the FOREST AND STREAM, supply the missing links, and re-establish the continuity, I will now give my version of it, which will be as true a version as can be expected after so many days.

Early in the morning of the fourth day of July, 1870, the little tug-gunboat Palos, under my command, on the thirteenth day of a voyage from Boston to China, ran into Horta Bay, a harbor of the island of Fayal. As soon after anchoring as possible, I, tired and sleepy from an all night on deck, turned in for a nap, from which, an hour or so after, I was broken out by a messenger, who delivered to me a note, addressed in a lady's handwriting, thus: "The Captain of the American man-of-war, Horta Bay."

As nearly as I can remember, the contents of this note were as follows:

DEAR SIR—I hope you will pardon the liberty I am about to take in asking of you a great favor, in granting which you will render me most valuable and ever to be appreciated aid to a fellow country-woman in great distress. Can and will you lend me a flour sieve? The steward has most carelessly lost mine overboard, and I cannot obtain such an article in Fayal; and unless you can help me I don't know what I shall do, for our flour is so full of weevils that I cannot use it. Very respectfully,

MRS. —, Am. whaling schooner —.

Fortunately, I was the owner of a very good flour sieve, and, as a matter of course and duty—for in my instructions I was charged to "render all practicable assistance to American vessels in distress"—I sent it. After breakfast I went on deck to take my usual two miles constitutional and my first smoke.

I was never quite sure about having fairly accomplished the two miles of my "stint," for, as my promenade was quite limited, 578 turns were required, and I found considerable difficulty in mechanically counting correctly, at the same time thinking of other matters; but by carrying 578 beans in my outside pocket and dropping one at each terminus, I presume that my reckoning was often tolerably close.

While tramping this morning, my attention was so taken up by the scenery, which included mountains, a pretty white city, fishing and bumboats, that I lost the run of my progress altogether.

Naturally I sought out the schooner from which the note had come; there was no difficulty in identifying her; the four or five whale boats hanging at her davits and astern proclaimed her vocation, and her nationality was so plainly marked by a large and new American ensign, which in honor either of Independence Day or our arrival was floating from her peak.

Another point made identification very easy and sure; excepting ourselves and her the harbor was bare of vessels. Although at times quite a number of the plum-puddings, as the whaling schooners which go out but for a single season's work are called, make of this harbor a resort for the procurement of water, fruit and provisions, and to enjoy a "gam," as is termed in whaler parlance a chatty ship visit.

As was the case with my friend, these schooners generally anchor well outside, for many of their crew, among whom there is always a large proportion of brand new sailors, never before used, are apt to fancy that they need refreshments other than those which the captain will procure, and they are very likely, if at all handy to the wharves, to give themselves liberty and obtain them. The schooner was a fine-looking craft, and it struck me that it would not be a bad plan for me to go on board of her, call on the Madame, and offer any further assistance in my power. This I proceeded to do, and in a short row my gig brought me and a bundle of latest papers alongside of her. I was received by the captain and ushered into the cabin, where I was presented to his wife, my still unknown correspondent. They were young people, evidently glad to see me as I was to see them, and we passed a very pleasant two hours.

As is the custom when one goes visiting on board some one else's vessel, and too great a strain upon truthfulness is not involved (not so in this case) I complimented the captain on the remarkably clean and tidy appearance of his vessel, and the Madame on the cosy, bright and home-like cabin, in every part of which were evidences of womanly taste.

They were not to be outdone in politeness and assured me that the mate, who had carried the note to me that morning, had returned charmed with my vessel, which he reported to be in most beautiful order, or as he expressed it, "Slick as a parlor." Of this I had some doubts; it was my impression that while that whaleboat was alongside we were very busy hoisting ashes, holystoning decks, scrubbing paint work and in other ways making ready for port. I did not, however, correct him; modest

as a man may be, he is not bound to reject compliments, even if not wholly deserved. No doubt the mate enjoyed his visit very much and his views were colored. My mate was a Cape Codder also, and a very hospitable, cheery, nor'wester sort of a man, and they probably had a most delightful "gam," during which exchanges of souvenirs, scrimshawed whale teeth, tooth ivory pie crust crimpers, etc., on the one side, versus navy plug tobacco on the other, added to the enjoyment.

The Madame accepted my compliment as to the cleanliness, but to my surprise did not seem to altogether approve of it. She said that, for her part, much as she loved cleanliness, her happiest times were when the vessel was in a most filthy condition. Seeing that I was puzzled, she explained that she referred to "cutting in" days, which on every occasion mean a goodly sum of money ahead and a shortening of the cruise. At such times the captured whale is secured alongside by slings at each end, so arranged that the body can revolve. The hook of a masthead purchase is inserted near the head, on each side of it a spiral transverse cut is made, and the strip of blubber, flesh, etc., is hoisted: when high enough, a second tackle hook is inserted, the hoisted strip cut off just above the last hook, and the great slice, perhaps 30ft. or more by 3ft., is lowered to the deck, and there reduced to dimensions suited to the try-pot. During this process the vessel naturally becomes very bloody and greasy, with patches of soot profusely sprinkled.

After explaining to me, the Madame asked: "Did you ever see a whale cut in?"

Fortunately I had. She asked when and where, and this is the story I told her: "It was in March, 1853, that the U. S. S. Connecticut, of which I was executive officer, while making a cruise through the West Indies, went into Bridgetown Harbor, Barbados. We passed, anchored in the outer harbor, an American whaling schooner, alongside of which a dead whale was secured, and the crew were busy 'cutting in.' As soon as we could get a boat a party of us started for the schooner to witness the work. We went on board, and your description of the state of affairs hardly does justice; it was about the hardest-looking place we ever got into. The mate told me that the day before, the captain and nearly all hands being on shore, this whale blew, not more than a mile outside, and that lowering away he, with the cook, cabin boy and a couple of hands, had gone out and captured him."

The Madame listened very attentively, and seemed greatly interested. She asked me, "Were there any ladies on board of that schooner?"

"Not that I know of," was the answer. "I did get a glimpse of a petticoat just vanishing through the cabin door, as I went over the side, but the mate told me that it was a washwoman come for the old man's wash."

This Madame seemed to consider a very good joke, and indulged in a laugh more hearty and merry than I could see that the joke warranted. My surprise can be better imagined than described, when recovering from her laughter she remarked, "That he had no right to say and he never told me that he did; I did tell him not to let you into the cabin, nor to say a word about our being on board."

"Who and what do you mean?" I interrupted, "Who was 'our'?"

Then she told me that she herself and her sister, a young lady, were on board of that schooner, watched our cutter coming toward them, admired our uniforms, but when we rounded to alongside, scud for the cabin, through the window blinds of which they saw us all the time, vexed enough, that arrayed in their "cutting in" clothes, they were not in condition to receive us. And it was the very schooner which I had boarded in Barbados, in which five years after at Fayal, this story, for which I was indebted to weevils, was told me.

The adventure supplied us with quite a stock of conversation. It did seem so strange that we had so nearly met before, prevented only by chance, and that after all this time, a flour sieve, or rather the need of one, had brought us together. Our conversation drifted into other channels and we found ourselves comparing notes as to our nautical experiences. She told me of the hardest time she had ever experienced, a tale of a voyage during which, with almost no luck in catching whales, they did catch fever on the Africa coast, and had dismal times and a gloomy voyage.

I in turn got up as pathetic a story as facts and imagination would furnish, of my dreary life on board of a monitor, dilating on the foul air, darkness, dampness and other discomforts attendant upon being boxed up under water in an iron box.

She was truly and gratifyingly sorry for me; she had "seen one of those horrid vessels, and all of the whales in the Atlantic would not tempt her to live on board of one."

I asked her when and where she had seen one, and if she remembered its name.

"Yes, it was the Nantucket. She ran into Provincetown Harbor one day in the winter of 1863, and lay out a gale there. I was visiting friends in Provincetown, and when the blow was over we made up a party and went off to her in a catboat. We meant to have gone on board, but it was too rugged and we had to give it up."

"Do you remember," I asked, "that when your boat first made attempt to go alongside, an officer standing on the turret hailed you and warned you not to attempt it?"

It was her turn now to be surprised. She did "remember very well that a man with a speaking trumpet did warn us off, and seemed quite excited, but he was covered up with oilskins and I don't know whether it was an officer or not."

"What made you think that he was excited?"

"Why, at first he was all right, only when our captain told him that he guessed he knew his own business, and could handle that boat without any of his help, he got very mad and swore at him awfully."

"What did he say?"

"Why, he called our captain a blanked lubber, and"—

"And so I still think he was," I broke in, "the sharp edges of a monitor would be very apt to cut down and sink any boat boarding in a seaway. I was the man who hailed you; I don't remember swearing, but if your captain said what you say, and I heard it, I have no doubt that I did so. I can only say now that I regret very much that I did not then know that you were one of the party, for I would certainly have managed to get you on board, and not have left it for weevils to introduce us."

Two hours after the sieve came back, the schooner sailed, and I have never (that I know of) met them since.

PISCO.

Natural History.

Address all communications to the Forest and Stream Pub. Co

A WORD ABOUT OPOSSUMS.

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Member American Society of Naturalists, Member A. O. U., etc.

IN the Proceedings of the U. S. National Museum, Vol. VII., 1884, there is an exceedingly useful contribution entitled "A Provisional List of the Mammals of North and Central America, and the West Indian Islands," compiled by Mr. F. W. True, the Curator of the Department of Mammals in the U. S. National Museum. This List not only presents us with the common and technical names of all the mammals at present known to inhabit the countries specified, but an approved system of classifying them besides. Now the present writer conceived it would be a good idea to republish such an authoritative List and Classification of our animal in the FOREST AND STREAM, and in doing so, preserve the same order and arrangement adopted by Mr. True in his Provisional List in the "Proceedings." Further, it will be my aim to bring this matter out in a series of chapters, and, as the adopted classification refers to and includes animals that strictly belong to our United States mammalian fauna, to offer figures of such animals, and accompany them by short sketches which will endeavor to present our latest knowledge of their habits and their geographical distribution. This, of course, can only be done as my time will admit, and opportunity offers.

In the present article the leading part of this List will be given, carrying it down to a point that includes an animal or animals which will constitute the subject of our succeeding contribution.

It is hoped that if I am permitted to carry out such a plan it will prove to be of service in more ways than one,—it will, as I say, record an authoritative scheme giving the latest classification of the mammals in our United States fauna; by the figures, in many instances taken from life, and even sometimes taken by photograph from the living animal itself, present correct portraits of the animals in some life-like or characteristic attitude; it will give, so far as our present knowledge extends, the geographical range of the subjects; it will, by giving concise accounts of the habits, distribution, reproduction, and similar matters, incite others to carefully note, and systematically record their observations relating to so important a subject.

The Provisional List and Classification of the National Museum takes on the following arrangement:

CLASS MAMMALIA. MAMMALS.

SUBCLASS DIDELPHIA.

ORDER MARSUPIALIA. MARSUPIALS.

Family DIDELPHIDÆ. The Opossums.

Chironectes variegatus, Illiger. Water Opossum. Guatemala to Brazil.

Didelphys murinus, Linné. Murine Opossum. Mexico to Brazil.

Didelphys derbianus, Waterhouse. Derby's Opossum. Nicaragua to Peru.

Didelphys cinerea, Temminck. Ashy Opossum. Costa Rica to Brazil.

Didelphys quica, Temminck. Quica Opossum. Mexico to Brazil.

Didelphys aurita, Max. zu Wied. Azara's Opossum. Costa Rica to Uruguay.

Didelphys virginiana, Kerr. Common Opossum. United States to Guatemala.

SUBCLASS MONODELPHIA.

ORDER EDENTATA. EDENTATES.

SUBORDER PILOSA.

Family BRADYPODIDÆ. The Sloths.

Cycloturus didactylus (Linné), Alston. Unau or Two-toed Sloth. Guatemala to Northern Brazil and Peru.

Choloepus hoffmani, Peters. Hoffman's Sloth. Costa Rica to Ecuador.

Bradypus inuscatus, Wagler. Panama to Peru and Brazil.

Bradypus castaneiceps (Gray), Alston. Chestnut-headed Sloth. Nicaragua.

Family MYRMECOPHAGIDÆ. The Anteaters.

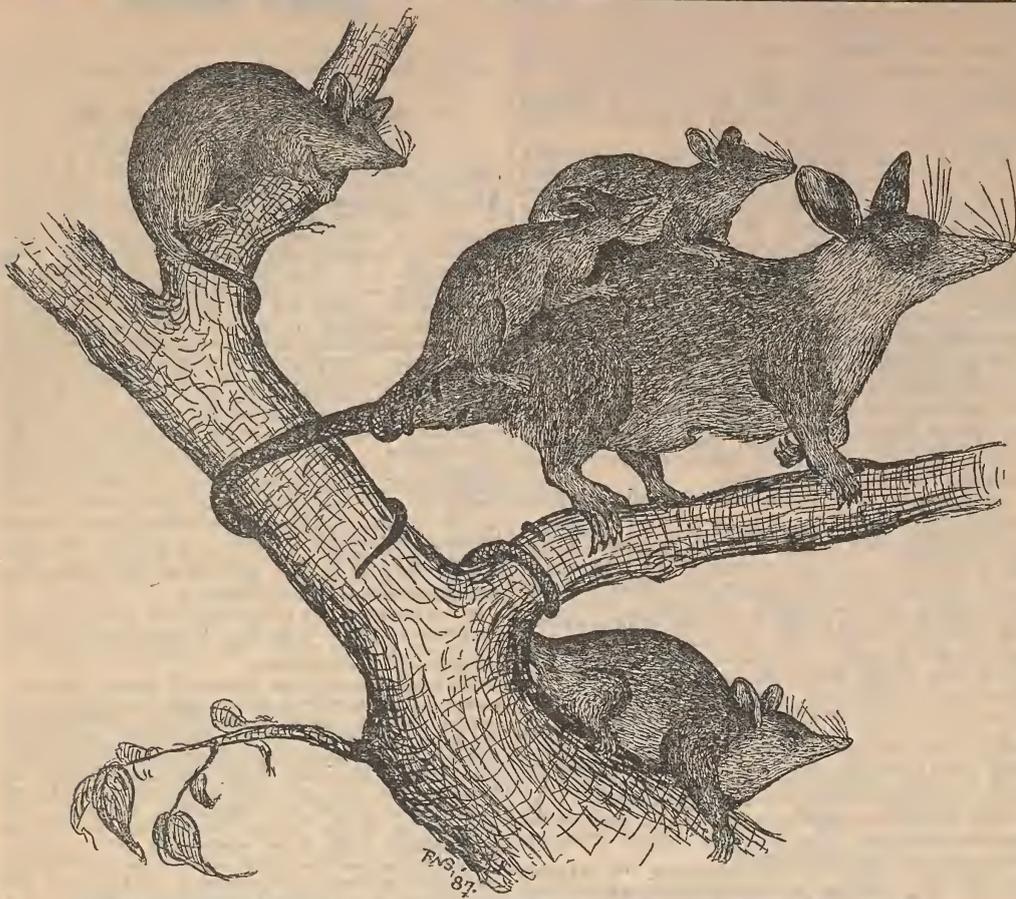
Myrmecophaga quadridactyla, Tamandua-Anteater. Mexico to Paraguay.

Myrmecophaga jubata, Linné. Ant-bear. Guatemala to Paraguay.

Then follows the Suborder LORICATA, but as this contains the Armadillos, and we have an Armadillo in Texas, we will reserve any further publication of the List until we come to discuss those animals in some future contribution.

It will be seen from our classification, as far as now presented, that it contains but one animal found within the faunal limits of the United States, and this is the Common Opossum, an animal about which much is known, and much has been written, but whose history, find it where we may, is always full of interest, both to the casual observer as well as to the naturalist.

To the Common Opossum then, with a few incidental references to its congeners, the present paper will be devoted; and first it will be observed that our Opossum is a marsupial animal, as is shown in the above classificatory List. Now, although we find a few Opossums in different parts of America, the great stronghold of the MARSUPIALIA, as we are well aware, in Australia, and outside of these two countries, animals presenting an anatomical structure peculiar to them do not occur. In the earlier history of our earth, however, marsupials enjoyed a very general distribution over its surface. When I say Australia I mean, of course, the Australian region,



FEMALE OPOSSUM WITH FOUR HALF-GROWN YOUNG.—DRAWN BY THE AUTHOR.

as some marsupials are found in New Guinea and the adjacent islands, while Opossums as a species do not occur there at all.

The Australian marsupials—and the mammalian fauna of that region is chiefly made up of them—widely vary, both as to their external forms and in many of their anatomical characters, but notwithstanding this fact, zoologists have, for convenience sake, kept them associated in the same group.

They all more or less agree, however, in the following general structural characteristics: (1), they possess a pair of epipubic bones, peculiar structures surmounting the pelvis in front; (2), they present a characteristic development of the reproductive organs; (3), their young are born in an exceedingly rudimentary condition, and are never nourished by means of an allantoic placenta, but are transferred to the nipple of the mother, to which they remain firmly attached for a considerable time, nourished by the milk injected into the mouth by compression of the muscle covering the mammary gland. They are, therefore, as previously remarked, the most typically mammalian of the whole class. The nipples are nearly always concealed in the fold of the abdominal integument or 'pouch' (marsupium) which serves to support and protect the young in their early helpless condition." (Flower).

The several forms of marsupial animals present us with many kinds of variations in their teeth, in our Opossum the canines are very large, while the incisors are small; in all, there are fifty teeth in the two jaws of one of these animals. Their limbs are short, and on each foot there are five complete and distinct toes, armed at their extremities with sharp and curved claws, except in the case of the first toe of the hind foot, "which is large, widely separable from the others, to which it is opposed in climbing, and terminates in dilated rounded extremity, without a nail."

Those who have had the opportunity of examining these animals will remember the curious tail they possess, which is partially naked, long and tapering, flexible, and prehensile.

Some Opossums, however, have completely naked tails, and as a rule are without pouches for their young to ride about in, and consequently these latter have to ride on the backs of their mothers, hanging on by their juvenile prehensile tails (*Metachirus*).

Our species has long leafy ears and a pelage of long, coarse hair, of a dull grayish white color, the face and muzzle being pure white, while the ears, on the other hand, are black. Nocturnal and arboreal in its habits, it lives principally upon fruits, insects, eggs, and such small birds as it may be able to capture. Farmers complain that Opossums are no strangers to the hen-roosts, and that they destroy poultry simply for the gratification of sucking the blood from the bodies of their victims; I have never been able to confirm or disprove this trait in their character. Few mammals are more prolific than they, and one of their litters may range all the way from six to sixteen young at a birth, which, when first born, are exceedingly small, and still in quite an embryonic state. Their mother places them all in her pouch, and soon succeeds in nosing them into positions where they may at once seize hold of her nipples, where they remain attached until they have attained some considerable size. They develop and grow very rapidly, and at the end of a month's time these engaging and pretty little scamps may be seen peeping out of the maternal pouch, when in a few days more the boldest among them will climb in and out, or even perhaps get around on their mother's back to hang on there by twining their tails about her own. Who among us ever having witnessed the sight can ever forget it—the solicitous dam seems to be absolutely covered all over with her sprawling progeny, and she pulls them along, some dragging behind her, some hanging at her sides, while the remainder are ranged along her back; this

thus she leads them along as she endeavors to find sufficient food to feed their hungry mouths—with a very happy party.

It is said that this prolific marsupial may have a lot of three-quarter grown ones of her own in the tree about her, while a dozen more as large as rats cling to her furry coat, and at the same time attached to her nipples another litter, recently born. Those who have had the opportunity of observing the habits of the Opossum in cold weather state that it is inclined to become torpid, but that it is never known to truly hibernate.

When confronted with any sudden danger, the surprising success with which an Opossum can feign death is generally well known, a trait which has given rise to the common expression of "playing 'possum." In some instances, added to the fact that the animal is wonderfully tenacious of life, this deception may save it from destruction, but to old hunters I fear the trick is too well known.

Many of the readers of FOREST AND STREAM have undoubtedly enjoyed an old-fashioned 'Possum hunt, a treat which the writer thoroughly envies them, for with all my rambles, that have now been made the world over, such an experience yet remains to be mine. Up to the present writing I have participated only in so far as the columns of the back numbers of this journal would permit me—vivid, real pictures oftentimes, but still lacking those bumps and bruises without which no chase can, to me, be a living reality. Yet in many instances they come so near the genuine article, and their reading brings with them such a full measure of pleasure, that I gladly leave this part of my subject to be filled in by others in the coming numbers of FOREST AND STREAM, which we have yet before us to enjoy.

As will be seen by the List at the head of this article, there is one genus of Opossum which has been distinguished by the name *Chironectes*; this curious animal is known as the Yapock, and is characterized by having webbed feet, and a peculiar transverse banded coloration of its fur on the head and scapular region. In many particulars it reminds us of the Otter, as it is almost strictly aquatic in its habits, and subsists on fish, crustaceans, and such similar diet as it chances to find in the marshes where it is to be found. Some Opossums attain a size no greater than that of an ordinary mouse, while the largest of them do not exceed in size a big cat, so that they are to be ranked among the smaller of the mammals of the world's fauna.

Mr. Oldfield Thomas, F. Z. S., of the British Museum, gives us an interesting account of Opossums in the 9th Edition of the British Encyclopedia, and speaking of the extinct types, he says, that "The fossil remains referable to species of the Didelphyidae are of special interest as showing some of the connecting links in geographical distribution between the Opossums and the Australian Marsupials, now so widely and absolutely separated. They consist of the bones of a considerable number of species from the Eocene and early Miocene deposits of central France, one or two Eocene species having also been found in southern England. The ancient Opossums have been separated generically from *Didelphys* on account of certain differences in the relative sizes of the lower premolars, but as nearly the whole of the species have been formed on lower jaws only, of which some hundreds have been found, it is impossible to judge how far these differences are correlated with other dental or osteological characters. In the opinion of Dr. Filhol, who has devoted considerable attention to the subject, the fossils themselves represented two genera, *Peratherium*, containing the greater part of the species, about twenty in number, and *Amphiperatherium*, with three species only. All are comparatively small animals, few of them exceeding the size of a rat.

Besides these interesting European fossils, a certain number of Didelphian bones have been found in the caves of Brazil, but these are either closely allied to or identical

with the species now living in the same region. So much for our knowledge of the history of Opossums in time.

Having now given the position of our Opossum in the system; presented a figure of the animal; defined its geographical distribution; given its leading structural characteristics; its habits; its methods of reproduction; its more immediate affinities; and, finally its relation to extinct forms, I will close this account, and on some future occasion present a brief sketch of the Armadillos.

BELATED WRENS.

NORTH NEW YORK, Sept. 25.—*Editor Forest and Stream:* When running a survey line over the Van Courtlandt estate, near the new Yonkers railroad level line at Van Courtlandt Lake, by the side of the old apple orchard on the proposed "Park Parade and Manhattan Race Course" (then staked out by Chas. H. Haswell, C. E., for the Van Courtlandt Club), on Saturday, August 26 last, in cutting through a thicket for sight, near the south side of the ancient garden, we were met by the bold challenge, plaint and quick hammer chatter or warning chirp of the "hallowed house wren." On examination for cause of this alarm, we found, much to our astonishment, in a chink hole of one of the old post supports of the paling fence surrounding this ancient garden, a nest containing two young fledglings, almost ready to enter upon flight life.

Friday last, Sept. 23, near the neglected and sad to say abandoned graveyard of the old DeVoe family, on Sedge-wick avenue, near Shaft No. 23 of the new aqueduct line, we discovered in the dense copse there a golden wren.

"The quick note of the russet wren,
Familiar to the haunts of men,
He quits in hollow'd wall his bow'r,
And tho' the winter's gloomy hour
Sings cheerily; nor yet hath lost
His blitheness, chill'd by pinching frost;
Nor yet is forc'd for warmth to leave
To cavern'd nook, or straw-built cave.
Sing, little bird! Sing on, designed
A lesson for our anxious kind;
That we, like thee, with hearts content,
Enjoy the blessings God hath sent;
His bounty trust, perform His will,
Nor antedate uncertain ill!"—*Mant.*

We watched its movements some time, thinking at first we were mistaken, but there before us was that ever upright tail at an angle of 45 degrees, there indeed was to be seen the quick sprightly movement and nervous action that never belies the smart little wren. This is very late in the year for wrens to breed and live in the chill neighborhood of New York.

CANONICUS.

PHILO.

PHILO; I fancy I hear the reader exclaim, anything to do with patent medicines? None whatever, fair sir. Philo is simply a woodcock that I have succeeded in keeping in captivity for the last five days, or since the 20th, on which date he, poor fellow, had to change his residence from the dark congenial depths of the alder swamp, to the furthest recess of my game bag, and eventually to an old biscuit box half full of damp earth and covered with a wire fly blind and piece of sacking to create an artificial gloom.

On the opening day for "partridge" I was crossing an alder swale, with a companion, when my pointer Beppo (grandson of Sensation) blundered on Philo, and as I was at half cock he was nearly out of range before he felt the shot, and then he fell, only being tipped. As he was so slightly wounded I made up my mind to try and keep him alive if possible and study his habits, but with slight hopes, I confess, of succeeding.

Arrived home, however, I let him loose in my sanctum, and he immediately walked to the darkest corner and turned his back on me in the most unsociable manner. I refrained from offering him any food just then, as I reasoned that when shot he had only shortly finished his nightly orgies and could not be very hungry. After a few minutes quiet he appeared to become drowsy and gradually the lower eyelid closed until it became horizontal, the upper meanwhile remaining open, but I do not believe the bird could see anything as he took no notice of a stick moved rapidly within a few inches of his head. His body gradually subsided until at last the tip of his beak touched the floor. In this most singular attitude he remained until evening, taking no notice of anything. Before sundown I transferred him to the box above mentioned, having previously covered the bottom with four or five inches of garden mould full of appetizing worms. Then covered him up and left him to his fate.

Next morning with fear and trembling I gently removed a corner of the sacking and peeped in, fully expecting to find Master Philo toes up. Not a bit of it, however, he was looking bright as a button, and the muddy state of his bill and the numerous borings in the soft earth plainly showed that he had passed the hours of darkness pleasantly and profitably. I immediately dug a fresh supply of worms and turned them in (probably some fifty worms). On perceiving them he made a most peculiar sound (something like the wheeze of a bad asthmatic), and on my return in about half an hour not a worm was to be seen. Since that time there has been no trouble, he "puts himself outside" six dozen worms at a sitting, or eighteen dozen a day with the greatest ease, and I think would eat as many more if he had the chance.

This bird has, as far as I am concerned, thrown a considerable amount of light on the vexed question of the migration of woodcock during the moult. He was nearly over his. Now I have two well-bred dogs, one a pointer, the other a cocker; both will pass this bird within six feet and not wind him, if the air is still (as it generally is in a swamp), and he takes no notice of them.

My present belief is that the birds do not leave the swamps, but remain so still and hidden all day that, coupled with the fact of their giving out next to no scent, a big bag is almost an impossibility. We got another cock and put up a third on the same morning Philo was captured, but all were almost trodden on before rising. In a few days, however, the birds will become fairly plentiful, though only for a short time, as they leave their northern regions early, usually about the 25th of October, although I shot one last year on the 8th of November; next day it froze very hard, and I do not think a bird was left in the province.

CHAS. A. BRAMBLE.

FREDERICTON, N. B., Sept. 26.