

woods shut off the view, and we contemplate, well pleased, the humbler wayside sights—the fireweed or partridgeberry, the purple brunella, the anemones, and mountain elderberry. Thus the first stage comes to an end, as we emerge at the pass between Eagle Cliff and the bold western spur of Lafayette.

As the middle stage is entered we are soon aware of a deep ravine to the left, from whose recesses floats, as higher ground is gained, a sound of unseen cascades. The deciduous trees gradually give way to evergreens, and these latter, with each zigzag, seem visibly to shrink in height. The Ammonoosuc Valley and adjoining country are disclosed, while ahead frowns a reddish mass of rocks—Lafayette's northern peak. The diminishing trees are changing into dwarf balsams as we end the second stage of the ascent and look down again on the western flank; across the Profile Notch rises Cannon Mountain, inaccessible from this side; in a little plateau between it and the neighbor Mount Kinsman reposes a charming mountain tarn, three thousand feet above the sea, whose names, Moran and Lonesome Lake, recall memories of a secluded lodge in the wilderness. And now we address ourselves to the last stage; and first we force a way through a thicket of scrub almost impenetrable without an ax, and are treated midway in the scramble to a near prospect of two tiny ponds, the so-called Eagle Lakes, which nestle in a plateau at the foot of Lafayette's main cone. Soon the timberline even of scrub is passed, and blueberry-bushes are the chief evidence of vegetation. It is well that the view is unobstructed and constantly widening on three sides, for the last climb over the stones is steep, and the wind sweeps in full force.

Like many other mountain heroes, Lafayette has a false summit; it is this pseudo crown which we have been conquering for some minutes, only to find the real top hundreds of feet beyond. But a compensation exists in the shape of a diminutive spring, whose drops, slowly oozing from the rock, are carefully appreciated; they will be the last for many miles. In five minutes the true summit is reached—a heap of stones surmounted with the foundation of an old signal building. At once all toil is forgotten in the view, in no wise inferior to that from Washington himself. Near and distant mountains by scores stand out with startling clearness. Over the whole White Mountain region and far beyond, from Canada to Wachusett, stretches the panorama. Deep ravines separate us from the Profile Notch. An untraversed wilderness lies to the east, where rises the well-nigh inaccessible Mount Garfield. In the same direction is the Presidential range. Southward the charming valley of the Pemigewasset glistens through the Woodstocks, Thorntons, and Camptons, hemmed in by our own Franconia ridge and the Kinsman and Moosilauke ranges.

But the cutting air and the distance from home are reminders that the most fascinating views have limits in time. To vary the route in the descent of a mountain is always a temptation, especially in this case, since we can traverse the crest of continuing peaks to the south. The part of the walk now to be undertaken is almost unique in this part of the country. With one exception, I know of no trip like this so-called "ridge walk." At the height of five thousand feet you traverse a long and narrow ridge, passing from one sharp elevation to another. There would be barely space for a road on this elongated spine of the mountains. Sheerly fall the rocks westward into the White Cross Ravine and other gulfs that sink into the depression of the Notch; eastward is a maze of forest slopes.

From Lafayette's main peak this interesting path conducts one in a few minutes to the South Peak, and thence to the bold height called Mount Lincoln. The jagged rocks of the latter are the features that give to this Franconia group its wild and tumbled appearance from such points as Lake Moran, the Cascade Brook, or even from the summit of Moosilauke. The formidable proportions of Lafayette are strikingly evident from Lincoln. On this wind-swept *arête* it is a pleasure to exist. There is no real danger except that from sudden fog. But there is a vivid sense of solitude amid these serrated peaks in picking the

"strait and narrow way" along the line of hummocks and hollows. From Lincoln we must scramble over steep cliffs and through increasingly thick masses of scrub until the Haystack is reached. Locally applied to all the summits from Garfield to Mount Flume, the name Haystack is properly restricted to the peak half an hour southward from Lincoln. From its plateau-like top the forest curves in a graceful sweep to the symmetrical Liberty, two or three miles still farther south. Attention is needed here to find the blazed path as we emerge from the ledges of the Haystack into the dwarf woods. The trees increase in height as we descend a few hundred feet, and a welcome brook is discovered. Again we wind upward and gain the foot of Mount Liberty. Avoiding the detour to its summit, we follow the Appalachian Club path, which now turns sharply to the right and descends Mount Liberty's western side. For a mile and more it leads us towards the Flume House, till it is abruptly lost in a maze of fallen trees, stumps, and underbrush, where the loggers have played havoc with blazed trees. This desolate region we can flounder through in the dubious chance of striking the path at the lower end of the clearing; but it is easier to keep away to the left on one of the main logging-roads, and, bearing continually to the left in the labyrinth of paths, we hit exactly the foot of the Flume. Thence past the Flume café a woodland lane leads us to the main thoroughfare, which we gain near the Mount Liberty House, and from there homeward the route is through familiar albeit dusty scenes.

Here are obviously no Matterhorns or Grossglockners for glacier-loving divines to conquer and thereby lay up reservoirs of strength for the winter's warfare. No learned talk is here of *séracs* and crevasses; no need exists of guides, porters, or apparatus of ropes and life-saving articles. But, though humbler than the giants of Oberland, Caucasus, or Sierra, these lesser friends of ours are health-giving and inspiring.



The Meanest Boy in School

By Mabel Gifford

If you want to see the smartest fellow in Topton, you just inquire for Blanchard Bixby. He is the jolliest fellow, too. He is always close to one hundred in his per cents at school, and he is ready and hearty for a game of baseball or tennis, or any fun that is on hand.

Joe Flavin is always boasting what he can do, but you never hear Blanchard Bixby boasting. He never calls a fellow a cheat or a liar, either; he never calls names. Now, that means a good deal on a playground. When Joe Flavin is in the game there is always a row, for he is sure to call names before the game is finished.

Pratt Hovey is the fellow they call the meanest boy at the Brick Street School, and he is always setting Joe on. He likes a row; that is, he likes to see it going on. You don't catch him in it, no siree!

One day (it was about a month before the holiday vacation) Blanchard Bixby came striding home with the hottest face any one had ever seen him show. He rushed through the hall and burst into Grandmother's room like a young cyclone.

"I am going to fight Pratt Hovey to-morrow," he broke out in an angry voice. Blanchard was not afraid to tell anything to Grandmother—she never was shocked.

Grandmother put her hands over her ears, and smiled at her grandson. "I don't wonder," she said, heartily; "he's the boy they call the meanest boy in school, isn't he?"

"Yes, he is, and rightly named. He is meaner than mean. He called me a cheat to-day, and then he called me a coward because I did not fight Joe Flavin for cheating. I won't stand any more of his talk." Blanchard was breathing pretty hard, and brought his fists down on his knees with force enough, Grandmother thought, to crack his knee-pans.

"And you think a flogging will do him good?" asked Grandmother.

"Yes, I do. It will teach him to keep his mouth shut, and to let me alone in the future."

"Do you suppose that it will teach him to let any of the other boys alone?" asked Grandmother.

"I don't know about that, but I can't help what he does to the other boys. I can fight my own battles, but I should have to be in a fight all the time if I followed him up."

"Are the other boys able to fight their own battles?" asked Grandmother.

"I—don't know about that; Pratt is a tough one, and heavy. All the boys are afraid of him."

"Do you think your blows will reach his heart?" asked Grandmother.

Blanchard looked keenly at Grandmother. "Pratt hasn't any heart to reach," he said, scornfully.

"But supposing he had?"

"Well, no; of course blows would not affect his heart any. He'd be raving mad, and hate me the worst kind. But what else can a fellow do with such a mean cur as Pratt Hovey?"

"If we could only find some way to reach his heart," said Grandmother—"and I am sure he has a little, just a little. Then, you see, it would help all the other boys as well as yourself, and, best of all, it would help Pratt. He is the one that needs helping the most."

There was another kind of a flush on Blanchard's face now. "I reckon you are right, Grandmother," he said, frankly; "but it would be a puzzle to find that way to Pratt's heart."

"Let us put our heads together," said Grandmother, "and see what we can make of this puzzle. If we find the right solution, it will be worth more than any prize puzzle you ever studied out. It is deserving of some pretty hard thinking. And we will just tack your school motto, 'Never say fail,' to it and see what will come of it."

"I wish," said Blanchard, "that Pratt Hovey had a grandmother like you."

"I would like to be a grandmother to him. I just ache to set my eyes on him," said Grandmother. "Couldn't you coax him here sometime?"

"Coax him!" Blanchard drew himself up to his highest point of dignity and frowned a most emphatic refusal. "Coax him! you'd have to coax me a spell, I reckon, before I would so much as allow Pratt Hovey to step across our dooryard."

Grandmother's eyes twinkled. "Well, I am pretty good at coaxing," she said. "I shall try it."

Nobody knew what was the result of Grandmother and Blanchard putting their heads together, nor of Grandmother's coaxing, but this much was known, to the great amazement of the boys at the Brick Street School: Blanchard Bixby did not fight Pratt Hovey the next day. The two boys, with all the other boys at their heels, met at the appointed hour, at the appointed place.

Some of the girls found out what was "in the wind," and ran to the teacher, Miss Willby, some crying and wringing their hands, some scolding and calling Pratt Hovey and Joe Flavin all the hard names contained in their private dictionaries. Pratt's sister went home crying because none of the girls would speak to her, and Joe Flavin's little brother ran into the woods and hid because the boys told him they would "knock spots out of him" if Blanchard was beaten.

Miss Willby, greatly distressed, hastened to the scene of action. The boys were so intently watching the pugilists that they did not observe her approach. The girls halted at a safe distance, and Miss Willby went on alone. When within hearing distance Pratt Hovey was rolling up his sleeves and shouting, "Come on, McDuffy!"

Blanchard did not make any preparations to remove his jacket, and said, quietly, "I am not going to fight to-day."

Pratt came puffing up in a great rage. "You sneak of a coward," he said, "what do mean by that?"

"I mean that I have postponed this fight," said Blanchard, calmly.

"Till when?" roared Pratt.

"I cannot say when."

Pratt burst into a derisive laugh, in which some of the other boys joined, while the rest looked wondering and discomfited. This was so unexpected of a fellow like Blanchard.

"Well, if you won't fight me, I'll fight you!" blustered Pratt, doubling up his fists and making an onset.

Before Pratt reached Blanchard, a whole posse of boys had seized him and thrown him. Joe Flavin was left standing alone, and even he was heard to mutter, "He might have waited for fair play." But, in duty bound to aid his chum, he began kicking the boys outside the struggling heap of legs and arms. Blanchard collared him, and choked him so uncomfortably that he agreed to keep quiet.

Miss Willby was standing just within the shadow of the trees that bordered the battle-field, waiting to see how the affair would end, reserving her authority until things took a desperate turn. As a teacher of the public school, her authority was limited to the boundary lines of the school yard, but as a resident of Tipton she could do something. "If I were in your place," she said to Blanchard, "I would go home while they have him down."

"That hardly seems the thing to do," said Blanchard. "He would be likely to fly at me the first time he saw me. We had better have an understanding before we separate."

"Perhaps you are right," said Miss Willby, "but it frightens me to see a boy in such a fury."

Pratt was begging to be let up. He had cursed and threatened without avail, and, finding himself helpless, began to quiet down.

"Will you let him alone?" said one.

"Yes, yes; you are breaking my ribs: ease up a bit, can't you?" groaned Pratt.

"Will you wait peaceable till he sets the day for the fight?" demanded the same speaker.

"Yes, yes; anything so you let me get my breath," answered Pratt, gasping.

The boys came up like one man, and stood silently looking at Pratt, who, after resting a moment, slowly rose to his feet, picked up his cap and jacket, and without a word or look to any one, walked away.

The boys looked as if they wanted to cheer, but were too glad to get him off peaceably to rouse him again by crowing. Joe Flavin sulked at a distance, evidently to see all that was to be seen.

One of the boys sidled up to Blanchard and half-whispered, "Say, Bixby, going to fight him?"

"Yes," said Blanchard.

"He's a-going to! he ain't backed out!" shouted the boy to his companions; "he just said so."

Then the boys could not be kept under. "Hooray! hooray for Bixby!" they shouted at the top of their lungs, while Miss Willby looked at him with troubled eyes.

Blanchard returned her look with such a frank smile that she somehow felt reassured and stepped back to the place where the girls had crouched, whispering and exclaiming and holding their breaths by turns. They were greatly puzzled by what they saw, and eagerly welcomed Miss Willby, plying her with questions.

When all had been told, the girls were hardly the wiser. "It is as good as a continued story," said one. "I never shall stop wondering about it until they have that fight. But I can't endure the thought of Blanchard Bixby fighting. Just imagine him with a black eye and blood on his face and his clothes torn! I wish boys had some other way of settling their disputes."

"What other way is there to settle with a fellow like Pratt Hovey?" asked another.

Day after day the boys waited for another appointment for the fight, but a week went by and Blanchard seemed to have forgotten it. The boys began to feel doubtful. "But he said he would," the boy who had questioned Blanchard repeated every time the subject was mentioned.

Pratt Hovey had taken no notice whatever of Blanchard since the fracas in the field, but one night after school he found Blanchard walking beside him.

"Hello, Pratt! Some of the fellows are coming over to

my house to-night for a jolly time. Going to have some games and a little spread, you know. Come over, will you?"

Pratt stopped short, and looked at Blanchard as if he could not believe his ears. It was the first invitation he had ever received from Blanchard, who was very choice of his invitations. And now, when things were at their worst, what did it mean? Perhaps it was some kind of a trap. But no, that would not be Blanchard Bixby.

"Will you come?" asked Blanchard. "I have a new book full of tricks and games. We fellows want to try them, and then we are going to have an exhibition."

There was nothing that made Pratt hate Blanchard so much as the very select spreads he had at his home—and now he had the chance to see the inside of the enchanted circle. And there was nothing he liked so well as tricks. "I'll come," he said.

Pratt wondered how the other fellows would treat him, and was greatly relieved to be greeted in a hearty, hail-fellow-well-met fashion, just—he thought to himself—as if he was one of them.

They had a hilarious evening, and it is certain Pratt Hovey never had enjoyed himself so much in his life. After the treat, Blanchard proposed that they go into Grandmother's room and ask her for a story. Grandmother had a reputation among the boys of Topton for telling "jolly" stories—stories of war times and stories of the times when she lived out West in a log cabin.

Grandmother's story was all that had been promised, and Pratt was quite won over to Grandmother's side after seeing and hearing her.

He had a good many questions to ask about the log cabin and the great prairies, and, while the other boys were talking all at once, he found his way to the chair next Grandmother's, and, encouraged by her friendly smile, began conversing with her.

One after another the boys left the room, and Pratt suddenly became aware that he was alone with Grandmother. It came over him, like a shower-bath of mingled ice-cold and burning hot water, that he had been entrapped here, that Blanchard's folks might settle with him for his insults to their son. He longed to rush out of the room, but would not have any one know that he was frightened. He sat nervously on the edge of the chair and shuffled his feet, and kept a sharp lookout at the door.

Grandmother talked on and on, and gave him no chance to make an excuse to leave. She asked him about his studies and his playmates, and he grew more restless with every question. Then she talked about his parents.

At last Grandmother paused and said: "I expect the boys want you by this time. I hope I have not kept you too long. I always like to become acquainted with Blanchard's friends."

"I ain't his friend," blurted out Pratt. "I don't know what he invited me here for. He never liked me, and I never liked him. I sassed him the other day, and he challenged me to fight him. He set the day and then backed out. But he's going to fight me when he gets good and ready."

"Meanwhile," smiled Grandmother, "you two can be friendly, I suppose."

Pratt laughed a little uneasily and awkwardly. He momentarily expected something to happen, and he was by no means sure how friendly Blanchard's and Grandmother's intentions were.

Grandmother appeared to take his smile for assent. "That's right," she said; "and come in any time. I like to have the boys drop in when they are going by. Good-night."

Pratt joined the gay company in the dining-room, and found them preparing to take leave. They invited Pratt to go along with them. This young man never had been in quite such a dazed condition in his life. He could not make it out; and the boys gave him no chance to say anything. They acted as if they had been in the habit of having him with them, and they all agreed that he had been most skillful with the tricks, which pleased him greatly.

"The next time," said one, "we will try the ribbon trick."

The next time? Was he to be invited again? Pratt was more and more bewildered. It seemed like being taken up and set down in a new world.

The following day at school Pratt actually felt shy in Blanchard's presence; things were strange. But Blanchard did not seem to be troubled or bewildered about anything, and greeted him cordially. Pratt was so engrossed that he forgot to hector the small boys. They thought he must be feeling sick.

The next week another of the boys invited Pratt to his house. "We take turns," he said. "We are going to try some more tricks; and bring your violin—we shall have some music."

Next to tricks Pratt delighted in music. The boys formed an orchestra that night, and asked Pratt to take the part of first violin. He was quite overcome by this honor; Blanchard Bixby had proposed him. "He ain't such a set-up fellow as I thought he was," said Pratt to himself, as he took his homeward way.

Week after week passed, and nothing was said about a fight between Blanchard Bixby and Pratt Hovey, except when some curious lad ventured to ask Blanchard, "Are you going to fight Pratt?" And he always answered, "Yes."

Nobody believed it now, however, for Pratt had become a member of the very select boys' club, and also of their orchestra, and it was plain to all that the two boys were the best of friends. Why they had made up, and how, no one knew. The puzzling thing about it was Blanchard's invariable "Yes" when asked if he was going to fight Pratt.

It was the last week of December that the invitations were sent out for Blanchard Bixby's New Year's Eve party. It was to be a "Ladies' Night," for the sisters and friends of the boys were invited. Pratt Hovey dared not hope to be included in the list. He had always been as cordially detested by the girls as by the boys. He was quite overcome when one of the tiny white envelopes was handed to him by the postmaster.

No doubt this was Blanchard's doing, and no doubt he meant it kindly, but could he stand the averted faces and whispers, the curt civilities, and the little schemes to avoid him that he would be sure to meet? He used to think that he enjoyed making himself disagreeable; he was not so sure about it now. Ever since he could remember, Pratt Hovey had been called the meanest boy in school, and he certainly had striven to merit his name. But of late he had undergone a revulsion of feeling. He hardly knew himself—it seemed as if he were some one else.

Pratt went to the party. He had been undecided until the last minute. He left his hat and coat in the hall, and went diffidently toward the door that hid the merry party from his sight. Suddenly it came open, and a vision of bright lights, flowers, and dainty maids fairly dazzled him.

Before he had time to realize what was happening, one of the maids had pinned a ribbon badge, worked with the Club's initials, to his coat, another fastened a carnation pink just below it, and a third came up with a written slip and told him he must find the mate to that line. He hardly knew whether he was walking on his feet or his head as he followed his pilot to the group of girls who were looking at their slips, and chatting and laughing as they read them.

His courage nearly deserted him when he reached them; he thought to see them shrink away and lose their smiles. Not so; they all came forward with a sweet "Good-evening, Pratt," and held out their slips for his inspection.

Pratt never had believed in fairy stories, and had teasingly laughed at his little sister many times, until she cried, when she came to him with glowing accounts of the fairy princes and princesses; to-night he almost believed in them. Certainly there was some enchantment at work. He did not see the significant glances exchanged slyly between Blanchard and Grandmother.

Grandmother went all around the room, and shook hands with every boy and girl there, giving an extra squeeze to

Pratt's hard hand, and saying to all, "Bless you, children! have as good a time as you can."

The party was to last until midnight. Five minutes after twelve all were to take leave.

They had a merry evening of it, and at last seated themselves for a little quiet amusement before refreshments were served. Blanchard stepped out and began to make a speech. "On the last night of the year," he said, "all debts should be paid and accounts balanced. I owe Pratt Hovey a chance to fight me, and I am ready to square accounts now. If you will put on your wraps and come out on the lawn, we will square accounts. It's bright moonlight, and the snow is hard as rock."

The girls looked puzzled and frightened, and shrank back, but Blanchard called out, "Come on, girls! we want you all to witness that there is fair play."

Whoever heard of such a thing as a fight at a party! It was a very silent little company that slowly walked out into the moonlight. The two boys took their places. The girls wished they had remained at home, and the boys inwardly reproached Blanchard for spoiling such a merry time. Why should he choose this night of all nights to square accounts with Pratt Hovey?

The two boys looked at each other, and Pratt stepped back a little to get into position. It was so still on the lawn that no one would have mistrusted there was a living being there.

"I offered to fight you once," said Pratt, drawing nearer to Blanchard.

"Yes," said Blanchard.

"And you backed out."

"Yes."

"Well, now you offer to fight me?"

"Yes."

"And I back out."

And back out he did, into the midst of the group of boys holding their breaths and waiting the onset. Such a shouting as went up from their united throats! They seized Pratt by the arms and legs, and ran, cheering and laughing, back to the house, while the girls followed, clapping their hands and crying, "Three cheers for Pratt Hovey!" Blanchard Bixby followed, smiling to himself in the moonlight and thinking of Grandmother.

When Pratt had been set upon his feet, very red and happy, and Blanchard had arrived, looking serene and contented, Pratt remarked, "You see, Blanchard, you have been fighting me so hard ever since that day you backed out that you have taken the fight all out of me."

There was a great handshaking then between the two boys, and Blanchard led the way to the supper-room, saying, "There is nothing now to interfere with the toasts, or the 'Happy New Years' after twelve."

Nothing more was ever heard of the Meanest Boy in School.



Living Batteries

By Charles Frederick Holder

The remarkable progress made in electrical science within the past few years has directed attention to the few and little-known living or animal electric batteries, the experiments which have been made with them, and the strange possibilities which are apparent. Among the fishes nine are known which have this singular faculty or power, the torpedo ray being one of the most familiar. As an illustration of its power, a fisherman told the writer that he had been almost paralyzed by accidentally coming in contact with one of these fishes, while other fishermen had had arms and hands benumbed by the slightest contact.

Not very many years ago the fishermen of Italy believed that they were at times bewitched by some singular power that came up from the sea, and this was held until Redi, the Italian naturalist, discovered in the seventeenth century that the witch was a very common fish, the torpedo. Réaumur, who tested the fish, says that the benumbing sensation is unlike any that he had experienced, but more

like a blow upon the "crazy" bone than anything else he could describe.

Neither of these scientists discovered the true nature of the power the fish seemed to possess, this being reserved for Dr. Walsh, an eminent physician of London, who by his experiments aroused remarkable interest in the living batteries with which he hoped to effect cures. He found that the fish is a perfect battery, constructed on the principle of the voltaic pile. It consists of two layers or series of cells of hexagonal shape, as many as two thousand five hundred being found in a small fish. Between them is a jelly-like fluid, so that each cell, to all intents and purposes, represents a Leyden jar. From each cell nerves extend away, the dorsal or upper side being positive, the lower negative.

Dr. Walsh gave regular séances with the fish, which he conducted in a way to excite great curiosity. Having arranged his torpedo and audience so that they formed a perfect chain, he completed the circle, and succeeded in giving each of his auditors a shock which may be compared to that received from a Leyden jar. When the fish was insulated it communicated to many people, also insulated, four or five shocks in a minute. Matteucci estimated that the shock given by the fish is equivalent to that given by a voltaic pile of a hundred to two hundred and fifty plates.

The singular experiments of Dr. Walsh, given in a somewhat sensational manner, produced an electrical craze in London, and large sums were paid for the privilege of trying the new cure. Experiments showed that the fish could kill a reed-bird. Its power is not sufficient to kill a man, but fishermen have been knocked down by the shocks which passed up the handle of the spear. Even after death the powers of this singular battery are apparent, and those holding the dissecting-knife have been seriously interfered with.

The most powerful of all the living electrical batteries known is, without doubt, the gymnotus, or electric eel of South America, which was first brought to the attention of the European public by Richer, the astronomer, who presented his experiences with one of the big eels to the French Academy of Sciences in an elaborate paper and was laughed at. No one would believe him, and seventy years passed before the story of an electric South American fish was credited. Then Condamine, the naturalist, proved it, and later a Dutch surgeon compared it to a Leyden jar.

The large eels, ten or fifteen feet in length, in their full vigor are often dangerous to human life. One which was captured near Calabozo for the British Museum prostrated a horse and rider in the struggle, and when finally dragged ashore by two natives gave them such serious shocks that they screamed aloud. An Englishman rushed forward and cut the line, receiving a shock himself.

The batteries, four in number, lie two on each side of the under surface, occupying nearly the entire lower half of the trunk. The plates are vertical instead of horizontal as in the case of the torpedo, while the cells are horizontal instead of vertical. They constitute the defense of the fish, and are powerful enough to kill the largest fishes. With this fish Professor Faraday performed his experiments which were described by Professor Owen.

One of the African catfishes, *Malapterurus electricus*, is a famous electrician, and its powers are appreciated by the natives, some of whom use it for various purposes. As a medicine it is used by placing several of the living electricians in a tub and forcing the patient to enter it, and thus receive a shock which is supposed to cure many of the ills that African flesh is heir to. Persons suspected of crime are forced to hold the fishes in their hands, their ability to do so being evidence of their innocence. In this little electrician the electric cells envelop the entire body except the fins and head, so that all enemies attacking it are received with a fusillade of shocks.

Of all the defenses found among animals, this is the most singular, and certainly one of the most effective, as few predatory fishes could withstand the series of electric shocks which would be the result of an attack.