

THE FISHING REEL.

A Talk With the Veteran Maker,
B. F. Meek.

NEVER SECURED A PATENT

Difficulties Under Which an Un-
expected First Order Was
Filled.

The Courier Journal of Sunday contained the following in regard to a former prominent citizen of Frankfort, which may prove of interest to many of his old friends here:

The fame of the Meek reel has spread to almost every part of the globe where the name of Old Isaak Walton himself is revered, and there is an interesting story connected with the first one that left the hands of Mr. B. F. Meek nearly sixty years ago.

"My brother and myself were then in the watch and jewelry business at Frankfort," says Mr. Meek. "One day Judge Brown, the father of John Mason Brown, came in to have a reel repaired. He was a great lover of angling, and a constant seeker after improvements in tackle. He was not satisfied with his reel, and so insisted upon our making one that we consented.

"For making the wheels a cutting engine was necessary, and there was only one cutting engine in Kentucky; it was at Danville, and had been brought over from England. My brother, J. F. Meek, who is now dead, went to Danville, cut the wheels, and we finished the reel with as much care as if it had been the finest piece of watch mechanism. Judge Brown was delighted. He exhibited it to his friends, and requests became so persistent that we sent to Switzerland for tools, which could not be obtained in this country, and I devoted myself to reel making, while my brother attended to the watch work. The greatest demand for reels then came from New Orleans, and a number of the orders were for England.

"Mr. B. C. Milam, who had worked in the jewelry trade, returned from Mexico about 1847, and learned the reel-making trade with me in Frankfort, where he is yet following this work. In 1852 my brother and I failed, sold out and he came to Louisville to work for Kendrick, the jeweler, while I went back to my old trade of watch-making until 1882, when I came here and resumed the making of reels. Owing to effects upon my nerves, it had become hard for me to handle the extremely delicate parts of a watch, but to this day I can make as good, yes, better, reel than I ever could. Before leaving Frankfort I was in partnership for a time with Mr. Milam, he making reels and I working on watches. Two of my sons, Sylvanus and Pitman C., have been working with me, but I fear that Pitman, who has been ill for months, will never be able to work again."

Mr. Meek was the first maker to

jewel fishing reels. He uses carnelian because that is so hard to crush. Diamond, ruby, carnelian is the order he ranks stones as to resistance of crushing, but carnelian is his choice for reel work. Besides being a student of mechanical science and an expert workman, he has made the fishing reel a study in all of its parts and has designed improvements which many makers have eagerly adopted, for Mr. Meek never patented any one of his inventions, relying alone upon the excellence of his own manufacture. The care bestowed in their manufacture will appear when it is told that he and his three sons counted seven as the extreme number of fishing reels that they could complete in one month. The spiral gearing and provisions for retaining oil where most needed without permitting the oil to spread over and gum up the works are counted by Mr. Meek as his most important improvements. For the spiral gearing he designed and had made, at a cost of \$700, a complicated tool that is scarcely larger than a man's hat. By it the teeth of the wheels describe a section of a gentle curve and, furthermore, slant across the wheel so that when in use two teeth of the connecting wheels constantly have a bearing, one tooth on either edge of the wheel so that this continuing force exerts itself at all times on the very center of the rim of each wheel. The motion thus gained is as smooth as that of a leather belt over a pulley. For years, he says, he pondered and experimented before he hit upon an adjustment of all the parts so that the application of force and the smoothness of motion would be the same when making a cast as when reeling in the line. In the one case the pinion must lead the wheel, and in the other the wheel must lead the pinion.

After trying many metals Mr. Meek adopted German silver as the best for the body of the reel. At the request of the wealthy Mr. DePauw, of Indiana, he tried aluminum, but found that the steel screws would strip out the threads cut in the aluminum. Owing to its extremely light weight he thinks that this metal would be invaluable if a process could be discovered for hardening it.

Mr. Meek does not make exhibits of his reels at expositions and would never contract with firms to make exclusively for them. His prices, too, have been inflexible, the best terms offered being some years ago when he did about \$7,000 worth of work for a large Eastern house, giving a 10 per cent. discount on payment within ten days.

Many prominent names appear in the order book at Mr. Meek's workshop, 839 Seventh street. One is for the reel which the Louisville Fishing Club presented to President Arthur and another is for the reel which Col. T. H. Sherley secured for President Cleveland. Among the local names will be found John E. Green, the Messrs. Dodd, George Avery, Judge R. H. Thompson,

Dr. Preston Scott, John H. Weller, Col. Bennett H. Young, W. N. Haldeman, Dr. D. S. Reynolds, Dr. McMurtry, Arthur Peter, Jr., Rofel Weissinger, G. M. Allison, C. F. Tatum, J. T. S. Brown, Emmet Logan, J. C. Burnett, B. F. Buckner, C. P. Atmore and a host of others.

Mr. Meek is now in his seventy-ninth year. He was born in Boyle county, Ky., when it was called Mercer county, and delights to refer to himself as "a Salt river tiger." Strange to say he cares little for the angling sport, declaring that he did not have the patience to wait for bites, but until recent years he was an enthusiastic hunter and accounted a good shot in any company.

How's This?

We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that can not be cured by taking Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CUNNEY & Co., Props., Toledo, O. We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 18 years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions, and financially able to carry out any obligations made by the firm.

West & Traut, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, Ohio.

Walding, Kinnan & Marvin, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, Ohio.

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Price, 75c. per bottle. Sold by all druggists. 1-6-9.

A Great Offer.

The Louisville Daily Post, published every evening except Sunday is offered with the ROUNDABOUT at \$3 per year. The price of The Post alone is \$5 per year and our paper \$1.00, making this the best offer of the kind ever made.

Subscribers to the ROUNDABOUT who are not taking The Post now can avail themselves of this opportunity by addressing this office or writing to B. G. Boyle, 526 Third street, Louisville.

If you don't want good work don't try the Capital Steam Laundry. 24 tf.

For Sale.

Good second hand phaeton in good repair. Call and see it. 15-tf. BLACK & HURSEY.

Babies

and rapidly growing children derive more benefit from Scott's Emulsion than all the rest of the food they eat. Its nourishing powers are felt almost immediately. Babies and children thrive on Scott's Emulsion when no other form of food is assimilated.

Scott's Emulsion

stimulates the appetite, enriches the blood, overcomes wasting and gives strength to all who take it. For Coughs, Colds, Sore Throat, Bronchitis, Weak Lungs, Emaciation, Consumption, Blood Diseases and all Forms of Wasting. Send for pamphlet. Free. Scott & Bowne, N.Y. All Druggists. 50c. and \$1.