

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JULY 1, 1899.

A FIGHT WITH BEARS.

ONE OF THEM DRAWS ABOUT WITH THREE LIONS.

A Second Routed in a Panic by a Terror Stricken Burro—Efforts to Catch a Third Alive—Escape of the Bear and the Timely Diversion Made by a Train.

As a Corporal, said a man from the West, I had charge of five privates who were cutting telegraph poles in the foothills on the western side of a Nevada mountain. The poles were for a military telegraph and we had an abundance of timber to select from. One day, while out after fresh meat for our camp, I suddenly found myself on the edge of an almost circular basin of about an area in extent. This basin was fifty feet below my level, with a slope down into it almost opposite me. There was just one tree in the basin, with a thick carpet of grass on the ground, and I was wondering over the freak of nature when a half grown mountain lion sprang into view from the slope I have spoken of. He came out of the bushes with every appearance of being rattled, and after a backward look and a snarl he galloped across the grass and sought shelter exactly beneath me, probably in a cave. I could have put a bullet into him easily enough, but as it was summer his fur was no good.

He was hardly out of sight when I heard a snorting and coughing and crashing over the slope, and half a minute later a big grizzly tumbled into view. In pursuit of the lion, he had taken things easy. He stood and looked around for a minute, and there was no doubt in my mind that he located the lion's den both by sight and smell. He didn't head for it, however, but ambled along to the tree and began a circus performance. For ten minutes he raked the bark with his claws and tumbled around, and I was getting ready to fire a bullet into him as a scare when visitors appeared. From out of the den below me crept three lions—male and female—and the cub I had seen. Perhaps they were mad over the way the cub had been driven home, and perhaps old Ephraim had been daring them to come out and settle matters. At any rate they were out, and it needed only a look to prove they meant business. The grizzly welcomed them with a low growl, and then stood still while the lions separated to attack him from three different sides at once. The old fellow knew he couldn't face but one, and he simply gave the old male lion all his attention.

I knew that the lions would go in with a rush when they got ready, and I used my eyes for all they were worth. Each beast advanced as you have seen a cat steal upon a bird, and the cub lion took the grizzly's rear. The female planned to come on Ephraim's left side, pretty well back, and the male made a direct advance. All four animals kept up a low growling, and now and then one of the lions would spit like a cat. There was no signal, and yet the three made their springs simultaneously. I think the distance covered was about ten feet. The thing was done so quickly that my eyes were beaten. One instant the three lions were lying half crouched on the grass, and the next there was a big ball of bear and lions rolling about on the grass.

The struggle on the grass lasted about a minute, and the growls and snarls and yelps made my hair stand up. When the ball unrolled itself the cub was out of the fight. He limped off on three legs, with his tail dragging, but the other simply retreated a few yards to get breath. This time it was the lioness who skulked around to take old Ephraim in the rear. I presume he watched her out of the tail of his eye, but his attention was centred on the male in front. The breathing spell lasted about five minutes, and then the lions sprang in together. This time the grizzly did not go down, and the trio went round and round the tree fighting in desperation. Now and then one of the lions was rolled over and over by a blow, only to come back again, and twice the big bear was fairly downed and held for a minute. It was the hottest kind of fighting for several minutes, and then the lions suddenly drew off. I had a fieldglass with me, and by its help I saw that a good deal of damage had been done. The bear seemed to have had one eye clawed out and to be raked his full length, and the lions were limping and covered with blood. I looked for the fight to go on, but after watching each other for a quarter of an hour the combatants decided on making the affair a draw. The lioness

begun creeping slowly away, and she was soon followed by the male, and though the grizzly held the battlefield he uttered no growls of defiance at the retreating foe. He acted like a bear who was willing to let well enough alone, and soon after having the field to himself he lumbered across the grass and disappeared on the bush covered slope.

There is no other wild beast on the face of the earth so ready to flight at the drop of the hat as the grizzly bear. He is king over everything, and he realizes it and will not be disputed. Just after a full meal he might not rush forward to attack a man unless challenged but at the same time he would not retreat. I have talked with Indians in California, Nevada, Idaho and Montana who had hunted the grizzly for years and encountered him under all circumstances, and none of them could say they had ever seen him rattled. On the contrary, are were agreed that the bear so such thing as scare in his composition. And yet five of us once saw old Ephraim so frightened that a prairie wolf could have kept him on the run.

We had camped on a level spot on a mountainside in Montana, and thought we had occupied it for five days and hunted far and near, no signs of grizzly had been seen. The sixth morning was rainy, and after breakfast we sat about and gave our traps an overhauling. We had three mules and one burro in the pack train. The mules were hobbled out, but the burro had his freedom. How it happened that he was on the east side of the camp by himself, while the mules were together on the west, I can't say, but such was the situation. The burro had eaten his fill and stood beside a bush about 200 feet from the tents, and his attitude was so sulky and dejected that it had been remarked. On a sudden we were startled by a choking sort of noise from the little beast, and as we looked up he stood almost nose to nose with a grizzly. The bear had come down a gully beyond the camp, and his intention was to walk right in on us without any introduction. He didn't get sight of the burro till he turned the bush.

The sight came to us so suddenly that no man could raise a hand. Bear and burro stood there for what seemed a full minute, though ten seconds was probably the limit, and then the burro uttered a half bray, half scream, and dashed forward. All of us believed that he either bit the bear or hit him with a hoof, as the grizzly staggered about. Whether he did or not, it was probably the sudden meeting and the awful bray which upset Bruin's nerves.

He uttered a loud 'Woo!' and wheeled to the left, but in his fright he ran against a rock and was knocked down and rolled over. The burro advanced on him, braying at top of his voice and bounding up and down with legs as stiff as iron, and as the bear got on his feet again he hadn't the courage of a rabbit. He dodged the rock and disappeared over the edge of the level and by this time we were all on our feet. We saw him rolling over and over down the slope for a distance of 300 feet. Then he caught his legs and got into a shallow ravine to the right. He went down that like a steam plough until he reached a bank of earth and rock thirty feet high. He could have got out of the ravine to the right or left, but he charged straight ahead at the bank. We didn't think he could make it, but he did. He went up that bank like a cat going up a roof, but as he reached the top he set a landslide in motion which brought down a dozen carloads of dirt. That was the last we saw of him, and three bullets fired probably added to his scare.

It wasn't the bravery of our burro which saved us from an attack, but his fear. He did just the right thing at the right time, but he deserved no credit. When the bear had disappeared we turned to find the burro lying on the ground, and as wet with sweat as if pails of water had been poured over him. It was three hours before he could stagger around, and he didn't get his appetite back for several days. We could trace the bear track from the bush to where he had first looked down on our camp. He had stood for a while to make up his mind about us, and had then descended him with the determination to pick a fight. Had he not run upon the burro as he turned the bush, he would certainly have made things lively in camp.

The London Royal Zoo wanted a full-grown grizzly, and through agents in New

York offered a cash prize which started out a dozen different parties on the trail. There were six of us in the Idaho party, and every man in it knew something of the habits of the animal he hoped to capture. To kill a grizzly bear, even by a pot shot, is something to brag of, but to cajole him into a trap is a feat which has not been accomplished half a dozen times since America was discovered. It is a well-known saying of the Indians that you can outwit a fox, fool a lion, trap a wildcat or poison a wolf, but when you pit yourself against the grizzly you'll get left. We started out realizing that the only way to capture old Ephraim was to outwit him, and a score of conspiracies were cooked up before the expedition had made a day's journey into the mountains.

The first move was to find our bear. The grizzly is a puzzle to naturalists. Sometimes he roams over a large area of country and sometimes he sticks for months within a mile of his den. Sometimes he shows up only after dark, and again he will roam all day and sleep all night. As a rule he is always encountered at an unexpected time. When we had penetrated into the bear country we made camp and began to prospect. At the end of three days the lair of a grizzly was discovered about two miles away. It was in a shallow ravine about half a mile long. The west end of this ravine began at a cliff, and the bear had occupied it so long that he had worn a regular path in coming and going. It was Joe, the half-breed, who discovered the runway and the den, and he hung about for three hours to get sight of the game. Old Ephraim finally came in from a promenade, and Joe came to camp and reported:

'Well, I have found him, and he is the biggest bear ever born in Idaho.'

As I said, we had invented various plans for capturing our bear when he should have been marked down. One of the cute dodges was to doctor a piece of meat with morphine. A doctor had relations, and it was at the head of our programme. We dosed a haunch of venison and hung it up near the ravine, but Joe, who was in hiding, saw a lion pull it down and bear it away. We tried a second piece and the big wolf got it. Then we turned to our bear trap. We had brought with us the biggest, stoutest trap ever made by man, and it was generally agreed that it would hold an elephant. This trap was set fair on the path, with its heavy chain fastened to a tree, and things were covered up so deftly that a fox would have trotted right into the pan. The old bear wasn't to be fooled however. He made a half circuit around the trap and after a day and a night a wolf walked into it and was almost cut in two as the jaws closed. Then we made a spring trap by bending down a stout spruce and using a loop of horsehair lariat, but the bear turned aside and avoided it and we caught a mangy wolf. We then constructed a dead fall at the mouth of the ravine, meaning that a heavy log should hold the bear prisoner until we could otherwise secure him, but though we baited it with choice meat he was too sharp for us.

When it became certain that Ephraim knew of our presence and was chuckling over our defeats, the half breed suggested a very simple dodge. Half way down the ravine was a smaller one coming in at right angles. Fortunately for us the soil was soft and deep, and one forenoon we dug a pit five feet wide, ten feet long and about ten feet deep. The mouth was covered with light poles, and over the poles we spread bunchgrass and dirt. When our work was finished the sharpest eye could detect no trace. So far as we could judge, the bear did most of his roaming by day. When the pit was ready we withdrew, and did not go near the ravine again until the third day. Then we made a circuit along the mountainside to reach the lateral without leaving a trail, and at 9 o'clock in the forenoon all of us were well hidden except Joe. He sat out in the open on a rock, just beyond the pit, and with a stick he kept up a pretty constant tapping on the rock. The sound was one to excite the curiosity of any animal, and was plainly to be heard at the bear's den. It was a full hour, however, before the grizzly came down to see what the noise signified. At the junction of the ravine, which was about fifty feet from our position, the old fellow sat down to size up the situation. All he could see was a half-breed pounding at a rock. He sniffed and growled, but didn't seem to be

looking for trouble. Joe got down from his perch and began to dance and sing, but the bear didn't fire up. Then the man began throwing stones, and it was only after Bruin had been hit the third time that he got mad and made a rush. With blood in his eyes and his teeth showing like grave-stones he came on, but as he struck the pit he turned end-over-end and disappeared from sight.

We had our bear at last, but hardly had our shouts of exultation died away when we began to wonder if he hadn't got us as well. We hadn't figured on a bear in a pit. Had he fallen on his back we might have noosed his legs, but he fell on his feet and gave us to understand that there was lots of trouble ahead. We designed to throw a noose over his head and choke him but he ducked and dodged like a prize-fighter. When we had worked away all day he was still ahead of the game and we were very much discouraged. It was finally decided to send a man over to Hamilton's for chloroform and sponges, and the messenger left next morning at daybreak. During the two days he was absent we cut long, slim stakes and drove them into the soil at the bottom of the pit, so as to contract the space, and we finally had the bear in close quarters. He didn't allow the work to go without objections. He tore out many of the stakes and chewed them to matchwood, and toward the last he got so mad that he had a sort of fit.

The messenger returned with enough chloroform to put four bulls to sleep. We tied the sponges to the ends of poles, and when all was ready we saturated them and stretched all together. Ephraim was game to the last, but he finally gave up, and Joe descended into the pit and tied his legs together and fastened a hauling rope round his body. By means of skids and one of the horses and hauling altogether we got the big bulk out of the pit, but it was two hours' hard work and we had to use chloroform thrice over. When Bruin was out we resoured his legs and bound him fast on a travois. Only one horse out of the six could be got near him, and it looked as if the bear would have to be dragged forty miles over a rough country by man and horse. The bear was so stupidly good-natured all the afternoon, and before we went into camp for the night we had dragged him seven miles. Soon after dark he began to file objections. He growled, coughed, snorted and strained, but he could not break loose. He would have kept everybody awake all night, but we had some of the chloroform left and we used it to quiet him down. It took a day and a half longer to get him down to the railroad station, and then we found we must turn to and make a cage to ship him in. By this time he was also suffering for food and drink.

We got six turns of a lasso around the bear's body and to these we fastened two chains and secured the other ends to the trees. Then we cut his lashings and got out of the way. The first thing he did was to lap up about two gallons of water, the next was to devour the freshly killed carcass of a calf. Then he drew a long breath and was ready for business. The cowboy who had bossed the tying up job warranted the lasso and chains to hold a herd of steers, but unfortunately he had never figured on bear power. On a sudden the grizzly made a lunge and snapped one chain as if it had been a cotton string. Heave—strain—snap! went the other ten seconds later he was free. We tumbled over ourselves to get out of his way and I believe Ephraim fully intended to make things red-hot for the crowd, but an incident occurred to scare him off. He was making for the railroad toolhouse, on the roof of which three men had taken refuge, when a passenger train came rushing up. He hadn't seen anything of the sort before, and the hiss of steam and the shriek of the whistle started him for the hills. He went off with forty feet of lariat for a belt, and a good length of chain dragging on each side, but he had secured his liberty and could take his time about getting rid of the ornaments.

Sensible Women.

The day has almost gone by when men and women feared to turn their hands to any useful work lest they should lose social standing. The world is beginning to respect the worker, and workers are found among the highest classes.

We read of Mademoiselle Valentine About, the Eldest daughter of the well-known novelist, starting a school of millinery for apprentices and amateurs in Paris. Edmond About was one of the most popular writers in France during the Second Empire, and earned large sums of money; but he left no fortune, and his daughter, being a wise woman decided to turn her talents to account, and join the ranks of money-earners.

The world is fast drifting away from the time—not so very long ago—when a lady was enjoined to lift nothing heavier than a tea-cup. Now women believe that their hands were made for use—even royal women. It is said of the Princess Louise, Duchess of Fife, who lives her own quiet

life among the hills beyond Braemar, that she does her own errands, like the wife of a laborer. Modestly dressed, she enters a village shop, makes her purchases, and carries them off to her carriage as if she were doing parts of her day's work.

A lady, visiting at Braemar, was in the village bank, and was astonished to hear the banker address as 'Your Royal Highness' an ordinary-looking lady, with a parcel under her arm.

SUPERSTITIONS OF CHINAMEN.

Discovery of a Devil in a Garden Hose and Its Serious Results.

On a farm in the southern part of California a young Chinaman was employed to do odd jobs. His one great delight was to sprinkle the lawn with the hose. One afternoon when he was at his favorite occupation a visitor thought it would be a good joke to cut the water off by turning a faucet at one end of the piazza. Now the Chinaman had sprinkled the lawn hundreds of times, but had not the remotest idea where the water came from, taking it for granted that it was the most natural thing in the world for water to flow from the hose. Therefore when the visitor carried out his idea and the water stopped running the Chinaman was sorely perplexed to know what had happened. First he threw the hose on the ground, stamped upon it and shook it, and then as this vigorous treatment produced no beneficial results he blew down the hose. Just then the owner of the house stepped up to see the fun. The visitor, seeing him coming, said in a low voice:

'Just see the fun. The next time he blows down the hose I will turn it on full force.'

'Sure enough, in a few minutes the Chinaman started to blow down the hose, and as he did so the visitor turned the water on full.

'Did you ever see such an astonished Chinaman?' remarked the visitor gleefully.

The Chinaman certainly was astonished. He threw the hose on the ground and made no further attempt to get it going. In a few minutes he returned with a small bundle under his arm, and going up to his employer said:

'Give me my money. Me no stayee. Debbil in hosee. Debbil in hosee.'

The joke had turned out to be of a more serious nature than had been expected. The Chinaman walked off in spite of all remonstrances. The owner of the farm laughed, and said he would go to the Chinese agent and get another boy. Bright and early the next morning a new Chinese boy arrived, and as everything seemed satisfactory he went with his small paper bundle to his room, the same one occupied by his predecessor. He had been in the room only a few minutes when he out, and going up to his employer said:

'Me no likee. Me no likee. Me no stayee.'

Upon being questioned he would give no answer except that he didn't like it and wouldn't stay. Recourse was again had to the Chinese agent, and the next morning another Chinese boy arrived with his invariable little bundle under his arm. Going to his room, he returned almost as instantly and, with a mystified way, said like the former one:

'Me no stayee. Me no stayee.'

Things were beginning to look serious, and the visitor wished he hadn't played that practical joke. For the third time the Chinese agent was called upon. This time the agent made some inquiries and promised to call the next morning and try to find out the trouble. The next morning he arrived, and, after looking around the place, went to the Chinaman's former room. There he discovered, written on one side of the wall, in Chinese characters, the information that the place was haunted and was inhabited with strange spirits or devils, and that Chinamen had better keep clear of it. This explained it all, and after removing the writing no trouble was had in procuring a new Chinese boy.

Not so Poor.

A coaching-party was passing through a bleak stretch of New Hampshire country on the way to a mountain resort. The coach halted at a water-trough opposite a dilapidated old house, and the tourists indulged freely in comments on the dreariness of the spot.

'I pity the people who live here!' said one young woman, in a tone unwisely clear. 'They must be as poor as poverty. Look at that pasture full of boulders and that discouraged meadow!'

'Well, now, ma'am,' came a voice from the doorway, in which suddenly appeared a black man in overalls and a bright red shirt. 'I'm not so poor as you think. I don't own this land. I'm jest a birin' of it!'