STILL-HUNTING THE GRIZZLY.

THE grizzly bear undoubtedly comes in the category of dangerous game, and is, perhaps, the only animal in the United States that can be fairly so placed, unless we count the few jaguars found north of the Rio Grande. But the danger of hunting the grizzly has been greatly exaggerated, and the sport is certainly very much safer than it was at the beginning of this century. The first hunters who came into contact with this great bear were men belonging to that hardy and adventurous class of backwoodsmen which had filled the wild country between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi. These men carried but one weapon, the long-barreled, small-bored pea-rifle, whose bullets ran seventy to the pound, the amount of powder and lead being a little less than that contained in the cartridge of a thirty-two-caliber Winchester. In the Eastern States almost all the hunting was done in the woodland; the shots were mostly obtained at short distance, and deer and black bear were the largest game; moreover, the pea-rifles were marvelously accurate for close range, and their owners were famed the world over for their skill as marksmen. Thus these rifles had so far proved plenty good enough for the work they had to do, and had also done excellent service as military weapons in the ferocious wars that the men of the border carried on with their Indian neighbors, and even in conflict with more civilized foes, as at the battles of King's Mountain and New Orleans. But when the restless frontiersmen pressed out over the Western plains, they encountered in the grizzly a beast of far greater bulk and more savage temper than any of those found in the Eastern woods, and their small-bore rifles were utterly inadequate weapons with which to cope with him. It is small wonder that he was considered by them to be almost invulnerable and extraordinarily tenacious of life. He would be a most unpleasant antagonist now to a man armed only with a thirty-two-caliber rifle, that carried but a single shot and was loaded at the muzzle. A rifle, to be of use in this sport, should carry a ball weighing from half an ounce to an ounce. With the old pea-rifles the shot had to be in the eye or heart, and accidents to the hunter were very common. But the introduction of heavy breech-loading repeaters has greatly lessened the danger, even in the very few and far-off places where the grizzlies are as ferocious as formerly. For nowadays these great bears are undoubtedly much better aware of the death-dealing power of men, and, as a consequence, far less fierce, than was the case with their forefathers, who so unhesitatingly attacked the early Western travelers and explorers. Constant contact with rifle-carrying hunters, for a period extending over many generations of bear-life, has taught the grizzly by bitter experience that man is his undoubted overlord, as far as fighting goes; and this knowledge has become a hereditary characteristic. No grizzly will attack a man now unprovoked, and one will almost always rather run than fight; though if he is wounded or thinks himself cornered he will attack his foes with a headlong, reckless fury that renders him one of the most dangerous of wild beasts. The ferocity of all wild animals depends largely upon the amount of resistance they are accustomed to meet with, and the quantity of molestation to which they are subjected. The change in the grizzly's character during the last half century has been precisely paralleled by the change in the characters of his northern cousin, the polar bear, and of the South African lion. When the Dutch and Scandinavian sailors first penetrated the Arctic seas they were kept in constant dread of the white bear, who regarded a man as simply an erect variety of seal, quite as good eating as the common kind. The records of these early explorers are filled with examples of the ferocious and man-eating propensities of the polar bears; but in the accounts of most of the later Arctic expeditions it is portrayed as having learned wisdom, and being now most anxious to keep out of the way of the hunters. A number of my sporting friends have killed white bears, and none of them were ever even charged. And in South Africa the English sportsmen and Dutch boers have taught the lion to be a very different creature from what it was when the first white man reached that continent. If the Indian tiger had been a native of the United States, it would now be one of the most shy of beasts.

How the prowess of the grizzly compares with that of the lion or tiger would be hard to say; I have never shot either of the latter myself, and my brother, who has killed tigers in India, has never had a chance at a grizzly. Owing to its bulk and muscular development being two or three times as great, I should think that any one of the big bears we killed

on the mountains would make short work of a lion or a tiger; but, nevertheless, I believe either of the latter would be much more dangerous to a hunter or other human being, on account of the immensely superior speed of its charge, the lightning-like rapidity of its movements, and its apparently sharper senses. Still, after all is said, the man should have a thoroughly trustworthy weapon and a fairly cool head who would follow into his own haunts and slay grim Old Ephraim.

A grizzly will only fight if wounded or cornered, or, at least, if he thinks himself cornered. If a man by accident stumbles on to one close up, he is almost certain to be attacked, really more from fear than from any other motive,— exactly the same reason that makes a rattlesnake strike at a passer-by. I have personally known of but one instance of a grizzly turning on a hunter before being wounded. This happened to a friend of mine, a Californian ranchman, who, with two or three of his men, was following a bear that had carried off one of his sheep. They got the bear into a cleft in the mountain from which there was no escape, and he suddenly charged back through the line of his pursuers, struck down one of the horsemen, seized the arm of the man in his jaws and broke it as if it had been a pipe-stem, and was only killed after a most lively fight, in which, by repeated charges, he at one time drove every one of his assailants off the field.

But two instances have come to my personal knowledge where a man has been killed by a grizzly. One was that of a hunter at the foot of the Big Horn Mountains who had chased a large bear and finally wounded him. The animal turned at once and came straight at the man, whose second shot missed. The bear then closed and passed on, after striking only a single blow; yet that one blow, given with all the power of its thick, immensely muscular fore-arm, armed with nails as strong as so many hooked steel spikes, tore out the man's collar-bone and snapped through three or four ribs. He never recovered from the shock, and died that night.

The other instance occurred, two or three years ago, to a neighbor of mine, who has a small ranch on the Little Missouri. He was out on a mining trip, and was prospecting with two other men near the headwaters of the Little Missouri, in the Black Hills country. They were walking down along the river, and came to a point of land thrust out into it, which was densely covered with brush and fallen timber. Two of the party walked round by the edge of the stream; but the third, a German, and a very powerful fellow, followed a well-beaten game-trail leading through the bushy point. When they were some forty yards apart the two men heard an agonized shout from the German, and at the same time the loud coughing growl, or roar, of a bear. They turned just in time to see their companion struck a terrible blow on the head by a grizzly, which must have been roused from its lair by his almost stepping on it; so close was it that he had no time to fire his rifle, but merely held it up over his head as a guard. Of course it was struck down, the claws of the great brute at the same time shattering his skull like an egg-shell. The man staggered on some ten feet before he fell; but when he did fall he never spoke or moved again. The two others killed the bear after a short, brisk struggle, as he was in the midst of a most determined charge.

In 1872, near Fort Wingate, New Mexico, two soldiers of a cavalry regiment came to their death at the claws of a grizzly bear. The army surgeon who attended them told me the particulars, so far as they were known. They were mail-carriers, and one day did not come in at the appointed time. Next day a relief party was sent out to look for them, and after some search found the bodies of both, as well as that of one of the horses. One of the men still showed signs of life; he came to his senses before dying, and told the story. They had seen a grizzly and pursued it on horseback, with their Spencer rifles. On coming close, one had fired into its side, when it turned with marvelous quickness for so large and unwieldy an animal, and struck down the horse, at the same time inflicting a ghastly wound on the rider. The other man dismounted and came up to the rescue of his companion. The bear then left the latter and attacked the other. Although hit by the bullet, it charged home and threw the man down, and then lay on him and deliberately bit him to death; his groans and cries were frightful to hear. Afterwards it walked off into the bushes without again offering to molest the already mortally wounded victim of its first assault.

At certain times the grizzly works a good deal of havoc among the herds of the stockmen. A friend of mine, a ranchman in Montana, told me that one fall bears became very plenty around his ranches, and caused him severe loss, killing with ease even full-grown beef-steers. But one of them once found his intended quarry too much for him. My friend had a stocky, rather vicious range stallion, which had been grazing one day near a small thicket of bushes, and towards evening came galloping in with three or four gashes in one haunch, that looked as if they had been cut with a dull axe. The cowboys

knew at once that he had been assailed by a bear, and rode off to the thicket near which he had been feeding. Sure enough a bear, evidently in a very bad temper, sallied out as soon as the thicket was surrounded, and, after a spirited fight and a succession of charges, was killed. On examination, it was found that his under jaw was broken, and part of his face smashed in, evidently by the stallion's hoofs. The horse had been feeding, when the bear leaped out at him, but failed to kill at the first stroke; then the horse lashed out behind, and not only freed himself, but also severely damaged his opponent.

Doubtless the grizzly could be hunted to advantage with dogs, which would not, of course, be expected to seize him, but simply to find and bay him, and distract his attention by barking and nipping. Occasionally a bear can be caught in the open and killed with the aid of horses. But nine times out of ten the only way to get one is to put on moccasins and still-hunt it in its own haunts, shooting it at close quarters. Either its tracks should be followed until the bed wherein it lies during the day is found, or a given locality in which it is known to exist should be carefully beaten through, or else a bait should be left out and a watch kept on it to catch the bear when he has come to visit it.

During last summer we found it necessary to leave my ranch on the Little Missouri, and take quite a long trip through the cattle country of south-eastern Montana and northern Wyoming; and having come to the foot of the Big Horn Mountains, we took a fortnight's hunt through them after elk and bear.

We went into the mountains with a pack-train, leaving the ranch wagon at the place where we began to go up the first steep rise. There were two others besides myself in the party: one of them, the teamster, a weather-beaten old plainsman, who possessed a most extraordinary stock of miscellaneous misinformation upon every conceivable subject; and the other, my ranch foreman, Merrifield. Merrifield was originally an Eastern backwoodsman, and during the last year or two has been my *fidus Achates* of the hunting field; he is a well-built, good-looking fellow, an excellent rider, a first-class shot, and a keen sportsman. None of us had ever been within two hundred miles of the Big Horn range before; so that our hunting trip had the added zest of being also an exploring expedition.

Each of us rode one pony, and the packs were carried on four others. We were not burdened by much baggage. Having no tent, we took the canvas wagon-sheet instead; our bedding, plenty of spare cartridges, some flour, bacon, coffee, sugar, and salt, and a few very primitive cooking utensils, completed the outfit.

The Big Horn range is a chain of bare rocky peaks, stretching lengthwise along the middle of a table-land which is about thirty miles wide. At its edges this table-land falls sheer off into the rolling plains country. From the rocky peaks flow rapid brooks of clear, icy water, which take their way through deep gorges that they have channeled out in the surface of the plateau; a few miles from the heads of the streams these gorges become regular cañons, with sides so steep as to be almost perpendicular. In traveling, therefore, the trail has to keep well up towards timber-line, as lower down horses find it difficult or impossible to get across the valleys. In strong contrast to the treeless cattle plains extending to its foot, the sides of the table-land are densely wooded with tall pines. Its top forms what is called a park country,—that is, it is covered with alternating groves of trees and open glades, each grove or glade varying in size from half a dozen to many hundred acres.

We went in with the pack-train two days' journey before pitching camp in what we intended to be our hunting grounds, following an old Indian trail. No one who has not tried it can understand the work and worry that it is to drive a pack-train over rough ground and through timber. We were none of us very skillful at packing, and the loads were all the time slipping. Sometimes the ponies would stampede with the packs half tied, or they would get caught among the fallen logs, or, in a ticklish place, would suddenly decline to follow the trail, or would commit some other of the thousand tricks which seem to be all a pack-pony knows. Then, at night, they were a bother; if picketed out, they fed badly and got thin, and if they were not picketed, they sometimes strayed away. The most valuable one of the lot was also the hardest to catch. Accordingly, we used to let him loose with a long lariat tied round his neck, and one night this lariat twisted up in a sage brush, and in struggling to free himself the pony got a half-hitch round his hind leg, threw himself, and fell over a bank into a creek on a large stone. We found him in the morning very much the worse for wear, his hind legs swelled up so that his chief method of progression was by a series of awkward hops. Of course, no load could be put upon him, but he managed to limp along behind the other horses, and actually, in the end, reached the ranch on the Little Missouri, three hundred miles off. No sooner had he got there and been turned loose to rest, than he fell down a big wash-out and broke his neck. Another time, one of the mares—a homely beast,

with a head like a camel's — managed to flounder into the very center of a mud-hole, and we spent the better part of a morning in fishing her out.

We spent several days at the first camping-place, killing half a dozen elk, but none with very fine heads. All of these were gotten by still-hunting, Merrifield and I following up their trails, either together or separately. Throughout this trip I used a buckskin hunting-suit, a fur cap, and moccasins. Not only was this dress very lasting, but it was also very inconspicuous in the woods (always an important point for a hunter to attend to); and in it I could walk almost noiselessly, the moccasins making no sound whatever, and the buckskin reducing the rustling of branches and twigs as I passed through them to a minimum. Both of us carried Winchester rifles. Mine was a 45-75, half-magazine, stocked and sighted to suit myself. At one time I had bought a double-barreled English Express, but I soon threw it aside in favor of the Winchester, which, according to my experience, is much the best weapon for any American game.

Although it was still early in September, the weather was cool and pleasant, the nights being frosty; and every two or three days there was a flurry of light snow, which rendered the labor of tracking much more easy. Indeed, throughout our stay in the mountains, the peaks were snow-capped almost all the time. Our fare was excellent, consisting of elk venison, mountain grouse, and small trout, the last caught in one of the beautiful little lakes that lay almost up by the timber-line. To us, who had for weeks been accustomed to make small fires from dried brush, or from sage-brush roots, which we dug out of the ground, it was a treat to sit at night before the roaring and crackling pine logs; as the old teamster quaintly put it, we had at last come to a land "where the wood grew on trees." There were plenty of black-tail deer in the woods, and we came across a number of bands of cow and calf elk, or of young bulls; but after several days' hunting, we were still without any head worth taking home, and had seen no sign of grizzly, which was the game we were especially anxious to kill for neither Merrifield nor I had ever seen a wild bear alive.

One day we separated. I took up the trail of a large bull elk, and though after a while I lost the track, in the end I ran across the animal itself, and after a short stalk got a shot at the noble-looking old fellow. It was a grand bull, with massive neck and twelve-tined antlers; and he made a most beautiful picture, standing out on a crag that jutted over the sheer cliff wall, the tall pine-trees behind him and the deep cañon at his feet, while in the background rose the snow-covered granite peaks. As I got up on my knees to fire he half-faced towards me, about eighty yards off, and the ball went in behind the shoulder. He broke away into the forest, but stopped before he had gone twenty rods, and did not need the second bullet to which he fell. I reached camp early in the afternoon, and waited for a couple of hours before Merrifield put in an appearance. At last we heard a shout — the familiar long-drawn *Ei-koh-h-h* of the cattlemen — and he came in sight, galloping at speed down an open glade, and waving his hat, evidently having had good luck; and when he reined in his small, wiry cow-pony, we saw that he had packed behind his saddle the fine, glossy pelt of a black bear. Better still, he announced that he had been off about ten miles to a perfect tangle of ravines and valleys where bear sign was very thick; and not of black bear either, but of grizzly. The black bear (the only one we got on the mountains) he had run across by accident. While riding up a valley in which there was a patch of dead timber grown up with berry bushes, he noticed a black object, which he first took to be a stump; for during the past few days we had each of us made one or two clever stalks up to charred logs which our imagination converted into bears. On coming near, however, the object suddenly took to its heels; he followed over frightful ground at the pony's best pace, until it stumbled and fell down. By this time he was close on the bear, which had just reached the edge of the wood. Picking himself up, he rushed after it, hearing it growling ahead of him; after running some fifty yards the sounds stopped, and he stood still listening. He saw and heard nothing until he happened to cast his eyes upwards, and there was the bear, almost overhead, and about twenty-five feet up a tree; and in as many seconds afterwards it came down to the ground with a bounce, stone dead. It was a young bear, in its second year, and had probably never before seen a man, which accounted for the ease with which it was treed and taken. One minor result of the encounter was to convince Merrifield — the list of whose faults did not include lack of self-confidence — that he could run down any bear; in consequence of which idea we on more than one subsequent occasion went through a good deal of violent exertion.

Merrifield's tale made me decide to shift camp at once, and go over to the spot where the bear-tracks were so plenty, which was not more than a couple of miles from where I had slain the big elk. Next morning we were off, and by noon pitched camp by a clear brook, in a valley with steep, wooded sides, but with

good feed for the horses in the open bottom. We rigged the canvas wagon-sheet into a small tent, sheltered by the trees from the wind, and piled great pine logs nearly where we wished to place the fire; for a night-camp in the sharp fall weather is cold and dreary unless there is a roaring blaze of flame in front of the tent.

That afternoon we again went out, and I shot another fine bull elk. I came home alone towards nightfall, walking through a reach of burnt forest, where there was nothing but charred tree-trunks and black mold. When nearly through it I came across the huge, half-human footprints of a great grizzly, which must have passed by within a few minutes. It gave me rather an eerie feeling in the silent, desolate woods, to see for the first time the unmistakable proofs that I was in the home of the mighty lord of the wilderness. I followed the tracks in the fading twilight until it became too dark to see them any longer, and then shouldered my rifle and walked back to camp.

That night we almost had a visit from one of the animals we were after. Several times we had heard at night the calling of the bull elks, a sound than which there is nothing more musical in nature. No writer has done it justice; it has in it soft, flute-like notes, and again chords like those of an Æolian harp, or like some beautiful wind instrument. This night, when we were in bed and the fire was smoldering, we were roused by a ruder noise,—a kind of grunting or roaring whine, answered by the frightened snorts of the ponies. It was a bear, which had evidently not seen the fire, as it came from behind the bank, and had probably been attracted by the smell of the horses. After it made out what we were, it staid round a short while, again uttered its peculiar roaring grunt, and went off. We had seized our rifles and run out into the woods, but in the darkness could see nothing; indeed, it was rather lucky we did not stumble across the bear, as he could have made short work of us when we were at such a disadvantage.

Next day we went off on a long tramp through the woods and along the sides of the cañons. There were plenty of berry bushes growing in clusters, and all around these there were fresh tracks of bear. But the grizzly is also a flesh-eater, and has a great liking for carrion. On visiting the place where Merrifield had killed the black bear, we found that the grizzlies had been there before us, and had utterly devoured the carcass with cannibal relish. Hardly a scrap was left, and we turned our steps toward where lay the second bull elk I had killed. It was quite late in the afternoon when we reached the place. A grizzly had evidently been at the carcass during the preceding night, for his great foot-prints were in the ground all around it, and the carcass itself was gnawed and torn, and partially covered with earth and leaves; for the grizzly has a curious habit of burying all of his prey that he does not at the moment need. A great many ravens had been feeding on the body, and they wheeled about over the tree-tops above us, uttering their barking croaks.

The forest was composed mainly of what are called ridge-pole pines, which grow close together, and do not branch out until the stems are thirty or forty feet from the ground. Beneath these trees we walked over a carpet of pine-needles, upon which our moccasined feet made no sound. The woods seemed vast and lonely, and their silence was broken now and then by the strange noises always to be heard in the great forests, and which seem to mark the sad and everlasting unrest of the wilderness. We climbed up along the trunk of a dead tree which had toppled over until its upper branches struck in the limb-crotch of another, that thus supported it at an angle half-way in its fall. When above the ground far enough to prevent the bear's smelling us, we sat still to wait for his approach; until, in the gathering gloom, we could no longer see the sights of our rifles, and could but dimly make out the carcass of the great elk. It was useless to wait longer, and we clambered down and stole out to the edge of the woods. The forest here covered one side of a steep, almost cañon-like ravine, whose other side was bare except of rock and sage-brush. Once out from under the trees, there was still plenty of light, although the sun had set, and we crossed over some fifty yards to the opposite hillside and crouched down under a bush to see if perchance some animal might not also leave the cover. To our right the ravine sloped downward towards the valley of the Big Horn River, and far on its other side we could catch a glimpse of the great main chain of the Rockies, their snow-peaks glinting crimson in the light of the set sun. Again we waited quietly in the growing dusk until the pine-trees in our front blended into one dark, frowning mass. We saw nothing; but the wild creatures of the forest had begun to stir abroad. The owls hooted dismally from the tops of the tall trees, and two or three times a harsh, wailing cry, probably the voice of some lynx or wolverine, arose from the depths of the woods. At last, as we were rising to leave, we heard the sound of the breaking of a dead stick from the spot where we knew the carcass lay. It was a sharp, sudden noise, perfectly distinct

from the natural creaking and snapping of the branches,—just such a sound as would be made by the tread of some heavy creature. "Old Ephraim" had come back to the carcass. A minute afterward, listening with strained ears, we heard him brush by some dry twigs. It was entirely too dark to go in after him; but we made up our minds that on the morrow he should be ours.

Early next morning we were over at the elk carcass, and, as we expected, found that the bear had eaten his fill at it during the night. His tracks showed him to be an immense fellow, and were so fresh that we doubted if he had left long before we arrived; and we made up our minds to follow him up and try to find his lair. The bears that lived on these mountains had evidently been little disturbed. Indeed, the Indians and most of the white hunters are rather chary of meddling with "Old Ephraim," as the mountain men style the grizzly, unless they get him at a disadvantage; for the sport is fraught with some danger and but small profit. The bears thus seemed to have very little fear of harm, and we thought it far from unlikely that the bed of the one who had fed on the elk would not be far away.

My companion was a skillful tracker, and we took up the trail at once. For some distance it led over the soft, yielding carpet of moss and pine-needles, and the foot-prints were quite easily made out, although we could follow them but slowly; for we had, of course, to keep a sharp lookout ahead and around us as we walked noiselessly on in the somber half-light always prevailing under the great pine-trees, through whose thickly interlacing branches stray but few beams of light, no matter how bright the sun may be outside. We made no sound ourselves, and every little sudden noise sent a thrill through me as I peered about with each sense on the alert. Two or three of the ravens which we had scared from the carcass flew overhead, croaking hoarsely; and the pine-tops moaned and sighed in the slight breeze — for pine-trees seem to be ever in motion, no matter how light the wind.

After going a few hundred yards the tracks turned off on a well-beaten path made by the elk; the woods were in many places cut up by these game-trails, which had often become as distinct as ordinary foot-paths. The beast's footprints were perfectly plain in the dust, and he had lumbered along up the path until near the middle of the hillside, where the ground broke away and there were hollows and bowlders. Here there had been a windfall, and the dead trees lay among the living, piled across one another in all directions; while between and around them sprouted up a thick growth of young spruces and other evergreens. The trail turned off into the tangled thicket, within which it was almost certain we would find our quarry. We could still follow the tracks, by the slight scrapes of the claws on the bark, or by the bent and broken twigs; and we advanced with noiseless caution, slowly climbing over the dead tree-trunks and upturned stumps, and not letting a branch rustle or catch on our clothes. When in the middle of the thicket we crossed what was almost a breastwork of fallen logs, and Merrifield, who was leading, passed by the upright stem of a great pine. As soon as he was by it he sank suddenly on one knee, turning half round, his face fairly aflame with excitement; and as I strode past him, with my rifle at the ready, there, not ten steps off, was the great bear, slowly rising from his bed among the young spruces. He had heard us, but apparently hardly knew exactly where or what we were, for he reared up on his haunches sideways to us. Then he saw us and dropped down again on all fours, the shaggy hair on his neck and shoulders seeming to bristle as he turned towards us. As he sank down on his fore feet I had raised the rifle; his head was bent slightly down, and when I saw the top of the white bead fairly between his small, glittering, evil eyes, I pulled trigger. Half rising up, the huge beast fell over on his side in the death-throes, the ball having gone into his brain, striking as fairly between the eyes as if the distance had been measured by a carpenter's rule.

The whole thing was over in twenty seconds from the time I caught sight of the game; indeed, it was over so quickly that the grizzly did not have time to show fight at all or come a step towards us. It was the first I had ever seen, and I felt not a little proud as I stood over the great brindled bulk, which lay stretched out at length in the cool shade of the evergreens. He was a monstrous fellow, much larger than any I have seen since, whether alive or brought in dead by the hunters. As near as we could estimate (for of course we had nothing with which to weigh more than very small portions), he must have weighed about twelve hundred pounds; and though this is not as large as some of his kind are said to grow in California, it is yet a very unusual size for a bear. He was a good deal heavier than any of our horses; and it was with the greatest difficulty that we were able to skin him. He must have been very old, his teeth and claws being all worn down and blunted; but nevertheless he had been living in plenty, for he was as fat as a prize hog, the layers on his back being a finger's length in thickness. He

was still in the summer coat, his hair being short, and in color a curious brindled brown, somewhat like that of certain bull-dogs; while all the bears we shot afterwards had the long thick winter fur, cinnamon or yellowish brown. By the way, the name of this bear has reference to its character, and not to its color, and should, I suppose, be properly spelt grisly,—in the sense of horrible, exactly as we speak of a "grisly specter,"—and not grizzly; but perhaps the latter way of spelling it is too well established to be now changed.

In killing dangerous game steadiness is more needed than good shooting. No game is dangerous unless a man is close up, for nowadays hardly any wild beast will charge from a distance of a hundred yards, but will rather try to run off; and if a man is close it is easy enough for him to shoot straight if he does not lose his head. A bear's brain is about the size of a pint bottle; and any one can hit a pint bottle off-hand at thirty or forty feet. I have had two shots at bears at close quarters, and each time I fired into the brain, the bullet in one case striking fairly between the eyes, as told above, and in the other going in between the eye and ear. A novice at this kind of sport will find it best and safest to keep in mind the old Norse viking's advice in reference to a long sword: "If you go in close enough, your sword will be long enough." If a poor shot goes in close enough, he will find that he shoots straight enough.

I was very proud over my first bear; but Merrifield's chief feeling seemed to be disappointment that the animal had not had time to show fight. He was rather a reckless fellow, and very confident in his own skill with the rifle; and he really did not seem to have any more fear of the grizzlies than if they had been so many jack-rabbits. I did not at all share his feeling, having a hearty respect for my foes' prowess, and in following and attacking them always took all possible care to get the chances on my side. Merrifield was sincerely sorry that we never had to stand a regular charge; we killed our five grizzlies with seven bullets, and, except in the case of the she and cub spoken of farther on, each was shot about as quickly as it got sight of us.

The last one we got was an old male, which was feeding on an elk carcass. We crept up to within about sixty feet, and, as Merrifield had not yet killed a grizzly purely to his own gun, and I had killed three, I told him to take the shot. He at once whispered gleefully, "I'll break his leg, and we'll see what he'll do!" Having no ambition to be a participator in the antics of a three-legged bear, I hastily interposed a most emphatic veto; and with a rather injured air he fired, the bullet going through the neck just back of the head. The bear fell to the shot, and could not get up from the ground, dying in a few minutes; but first he seized his left wrist in his teeth and bit clean through it, completely separating the bones of the paw and arm. Although a smaller bear than the big one I first shot, he would probably have proved a much more ugly foe, for he was less unwieldy, and had much longer and sharper teeth and claws. I think that if my companion had merely broken the beast's leg he would have had his curiosity as to its probable conduct more than gratified.

We tried eating the grizzly's flesh, but it was not good, being coarse and not well flavored; and besides, we could not get over the feeling that it had belonged to a carrion-feeder. The flesh of the little black bear, on the other hand, was excellent; it tasted like that of a young pig. Doubtless, if a young grizzly, which had fed merely upon fruits, berries, and acorns, was killed, its flesh would prove good eating; but even then it would probably not be equal to a black bear.

A day or two after the death of the big bear, we went out one afternoon on horseback, intending merely to ride down to see a great cañon lying some six miles west of our camp; we went more to look at the scenery than for any other reason, though, of course, neither of us ever stirred out of camp without his rifle. We rode down the valley in which we had camped through alternate pine groves and open glades, until we reached the cañon, and then skirted its brink for a mile or so. It was a great chasm, many miles in length, as if the table-land had been rent asunder by some terrible and unknown force; its sides were sheer walls of rock, rising three or four hundred feet straight up in the air, and worn by the weather till they looked like the towers and battlements of some vast fortress. Between them at the bottom was a space, in some places nearly a quarter of a mile wide, in others very narrow, through whose middle foamed a deep rapid torrent of which the sources lay far back among the snow-topped mountains around Cloud Peak. In this valley, dark-green, somber pines stood in groups, stiff and erect; and here and there among them were groves of poplar and cottonwood, with slender branches and trembling leaves, their bright green already changing to yellow in the sharp fall weather. We went down to where the mouth of the cañon opened out, and rode our horses to the end of a great jutting promontory of rock, thrust out into the plain; and in the cold clear air we looked far over the broad valley of the Big Horn as it lay

at our very feet, walled in on the other side by the distant chain of the Rocky Mountains.

Turning our horses, we rode back along the edge of another cañon-like valley, with a brook flowing down in its center, and its rocky sides covered with an uninterrupted pine forest—the place of all others in whose inaccessible wildness and ruggedness a bear would find a safe retreat. After some time we came to where other valleys, with steep grass-grown sides, covered with sage-brush, branched out from it, and we followed one of these out. There was plenty of elk sign about, and we saw several black-tail deer. These last were very common on the mountains, but we had not hunted them at all, as we were in no need of meat. But this afternoon we came across a buck with remarkably fine antlers, finer than any I had ever got, and accordingly I shot it, and we stopped to cut off and skin out the horns, throwing the reins over the heads of the horses and leaving them to graze by themselves. The body lay near the crest of one side of a deep valley or ravine which headed up on the plateau a mile to our left. Except for scattered trees and bushes the valley was bare; but there was heavy timber along the crests of the hills on its opposite side. It took some time to fix the head properly, and we were just finishing when Merrifield sprang to his feet and exclaimed, "Look at the bears!" pointing down into the valley below us. Sure enough, there were two bears (which afterwards proved to be an old she and a nearly full-grown cub) traveling up the bottom of the valley, much too far off for us to shoot. Grasping our rifles and throwing off our hats, we started off as hard as we could run diagonally down the hillside, so as to cut them off. It was some little time before they saw us, when they made off at a lumbering gallop up the valley. It would seem impossible to run into two grizzlies in the open, but they were going up hill and we down, and moreover the old one kept stopping. The cub would forge ahead and could probably have escaped us, but the mother now and then stopped to sit up on her haunches and look round at us, when the cub would run back to her. The upshot was that we got ahead of them, when they turned and went straight up one hillside as we ran straight down the other behind them. By this time I was pretty nearly done out, for running along the steep ground through the sage-brush was most exhausting work; and Merrifield kept gaining on me and was well in front. Just as he disappeared over a bank, almost at the bottom of the valley, I tripped over a bush and fell full length. When I got up I knew I could never make up the ground I had lost, and besides could hardly run any longer. Merrifield was out of sight below, and the bears were laboring up the steep hillside directly opposite and about three hundred yards off; so I sat down and began to shoot over Merrifield's head, aiming at the big bear. She was going very steadily and in a straight line, and each bullet sent up a puff of dust where it struck the dry soil, so that I could keep correcting my aim; and the fourth ball crashed into the old bear's flank. She lurched heavily forward, but recovered herself and reached the timber, while Merrifield, who had put on a spurt, was not far behind.

I toiled up the hill at a sort of trot, fairly gasping and sobbing for breath; but before I got to the top I heard a couple of shots and a shout. The old bear had turned as soon as she was in the timber, and come towards Merrifield; but he gave her the death-wound by firing into her chest, and then shot at the young one, knocking it over. When I came up he was just walking towards the latter to finish it with the revolver, but it suddenly jumped up as lively as ever and made off at a great pace—for it was nearly full-grown. It was impossible to fire where the tree-trunks were so thick, but there was a small opening across which it would have to pass, and collecting all my energies I made a last run, got into position, and covered the opening with my rifle. The instant the bear appeared I fired, and it turned a dozen somersaults downhill, rolling over and over; the ball had struck it near the tail and had ranged forward through the hollow of the body. Each of us had thus given the fatal wound to the bear into which the other had fired the first bullet. The run, though short, had been very sharp, and over such awful country that we were completely fagged out, and could hardly speak for lack of breath. The sun had already set, and it was too late to skin the animals; so we merely dressed them, caught the ponies—with some trouble, for they were frightened at the smell of the bear's blood on our hands—and rode home through the darkening woods. Next day we brought the teamster and two of the steadiest pack-horses to the carcasses, and took the skins into camp.

The feed for the horses was excellent in the valley in which we were camped, and the rest after their long journey across the plains did them good. They had picked up wonderfully in condition during our stay on the mountains; but they were apt to wander very far during the night, for there were so many bears and other wild beasts round that they kept getting frightened and running off. We were very loath to leave our hunting grounds, but time was pressing, and we had already

THE DEATH OF OLD EPHRAIM.

[DRAWN BY A. B. FROST, ENGRAVED BY S. P. DAVIS.]

many more trophies than we could carry; so one cool morning, when the branches of the evergreens were laden with the feathery snow that had fallen overnight, we struck camp and started out of the mountains, each of us taking his own bedding behind his saddle, while the pack-ponies were loaded down with bear skins, elk and deer antlers, and the hides and furs of other game. In single file we moved through the woods and across the cañons to the edge of the great table-land, and then slowly down the steep slope to its foot, where we found our canvas-topped wagon. Next day saw us setting out on our long journey homewards, across the three hundred weary miles of treeless and barren-looking plains country.

Theodore Roosevelt.

ORCHIDS.

THE tulipomania which two hundred and fifty years ago shook financial Holland to its very center finds a mild, modern echo in the orchidomania of to-day.

Orchids, it is true, have not created an "exchange" where fortunes are won and lost in a day. An orchid bulb has never been owned by a company and sold on shares, as its prototype was in sober, money-getting Holland in days gone by; still, the fact that a single plant of this group has been known to cost hundreds and even thousands of dollars offers some slight justification for the coinage of a word to express the popular estimate of the fancy that lies back of such transactions.

A visit to a fine collection of plants some months ago brought conviction home that there were still a few people ignorant of what an orchid is. Within the space of ten minutes I heard one group of people informed that they were "pitcher-plants," and that "travelers were often saved from death by the water they held"; and another party was informed that they were "a species of the prickly pear." Pointing to one of the bulbs, the instructress said, "There is the pear, you see, but this one hasn't any prickles."

Orchids are plants belonging to the monocotyledons—the same great class as Indian corn; many of them are air-plants; all of them, almost without exception, show some marked peculiarity of form or function. There are no flowers which so richly repay study as do the orchids; their forms are so extraordinary, their properties so curious, their structure and habits so marvelous, that it is not strange they should prove so absorbingly interesting to the intelligent collector. A taste for orchids can be indulged by very few people, because of the great expense it entails. The variety of these plants which will grow in an ordinary greenhouse is comparatively small. Being gathered, as they are, from every latitude, growing under every climatic condition, it is necessary, in order to insure success in artificial rearing, to have several different greenhouses for a collection including any great variety.

FIG. 1.—ODONTOGLOSSUM CORDATUM.

The mere mimetic quality of orchids, which catches the eye and fancy of casual observers, has been absurdly exaggerated both in verbal description and popular illustration. Making all due allowance, however, for this exaggeration, the suggestion found in their curious forms of birds and butterflies, spiders (Fig. 1) and ants, and even of strange mythologic monsters, is strong enough to give added interest to their fantastic beauty of form and color.

I shall make no attempt here to illustrate many of the more magnificent varieties of the orchids,—of the *Vandeæ*, the *Sobralias*, the *Lælias* and *Stanhopias*,—since, without reproducing their natural size and colors, no idea of the real beauty of the flowers could be given. The gorgeousness of tint, the singularity of marking to be found among them, are to be found nowhere else in the vegetable world. Every color of the rainbow is represented in the orchid family, and scores of tints that the rainbow knows not. Great rosy sheets of blossoms, masses of gorgeous orange (Fig. 2), vivid lemon-color, somber brown, and coral red, clusters of delicate blue and lilac and pink, of Nile green, and opalescent