

detached from the company and sent on before to the cave, where, throwing off their cloaks, they appeared in the costumes described. I purposely led the company round and round in the dark, both to create the impression of distance and to give my confederates time to take up new positions and assume new characters.

Coming to the cave: Behind the canopy of the throne, unseen by the company, was the recess which we had used for a bed-chamber. Here, from time to time, one of the courtiers concealed himself and produced those wonders of legerdemain. The serpent was of India rubber, inflated with air. It was so fragile that when placid it was scarcely visible. It lay, unnoticed, in the lap of the Wizard, with its tail behind the curtain. On being inflated by the conspirator behind, it grew into sight out of nothing. When thrown into the air it was caught by the draught of the fire and drawn into the chimney.

The rooster was produced in the same manner. The ass's head was also a rubber contrivance, inflated through a concealed crevice. Several times did that inquisitive beast insert his head into our presence, as though curious to see what was going on.

How were the refreshments prepared?

In the concealed recess was one of those apertures in the wall which I had closed with brush and which could be easily opened. This led to a nook

among the rocks where another fire had been kindled and a kettle of water boiled. The refreshments were thus prepared by the courtier whose absence was scarcely noticed, and handed through at the proper moment.

I have only to add that a number of masks, momentarily shown in a gleam of light, gave the impression of numerous attendants, and that the musical instrument, with whose droning and unfamiliar strains we had been so bewildered, was the weird "kazoo," which was just then beginning to be popular in college circles.

Now the mystery is unraveled.

I spent a week at the cave with my friends. Each evening we were visited by a surprise party from the village. When our fire-works gave out we illuminated with pine-knots and birch bark.

When the students returned to town I removed most of my effects, which was very fortunate, as a thaw set in and the cascade became impassable. I watched for several weeks, but never had another opportunity to enter the cavern.

Ten years have rolled away and I have been informed that never again has the cave been accessible, as the cascade has never been so completely frozen as during that severe winter. Already, the story of the Wizard of the Cascade, with many changes and additions, has become a legend enshrined in the local superstitious lore

HUNTING THE CALIFORNIA LION.

By L. D. ROSS.

IT was midnight. We were slowly working our way up a dark and narrow cañon. Old Blucher, who for some reason best known to himself refused to hunt, trailed gloomily at our heels. Not so much as a whine had we heard from Tip, save when at long intervals he dashed in to report.

Lack of excitement added to our weariness, and at last we all sat or lay around listening to the mournful notes of the Spanish whippoorwill and wondering how far it was down to the little river which flowed beneath us.

Charlie and Fred were both stretched

on their faces fast asleep. Billy sat by the dusty old lantern, chewing absently at a stalk of filaree and staring blankly into the darkness. I lay listening to the peculiar musical murmur which running water makes at night when one's ears are partly dulled by sleep.

At times I fancied I could detect a thread of some familiar air, running through it all. Then my attention became absorbed in the movements of a flea which was located exactly between my shoulders. I speculated as to the direction he would take next. Then I lay back among the stones; and then—

A long musical note, sweeter than an organ tone, came from the pine ridge to our right. In an instant the whole party, was on its feet, wide awake and listening breathlessly for Tip's next cry. It soon came. Then another and another, showing clearly that it was a hot trail. Old Blucher, seeming to feel that this was a call to action, ceased sulking like Achilles in his tent, and with an eager whine tore through the greasewood up the mountain, making more noise than an elephant. Soon his deep bawl echoed down the cañon as he labored along the trail.

After a few minutes of excited listening we could plainly perceive that the dogs were rapidly pressing their quarry toward a point of rocks overhanging a shale slide near the mountain top. Their cries were now blended in one confused medley of sound, through which old Blucher's deep bay roared a persistent bass.

"Come on!" said Billy. "They're pressing him hard. He won't stay on the ground long," and the eager hunter plunged into the brush, through which we all began to struggle, toward the summit.

Fighting our way through the thick brush, over loose boulders and treacherous shale, which continually slipped away from our feet, we reached the comparatively bare summit of the ridge.

From far up the mountain came a succession of short, fierce yelps.

"Treed!" yelled the mountaineer, now as thoroughly excited as we were; and dashing up the ridge, which rose toward the mountain at an angle of 45 degrees, he set us a pace which threatened to destroy our usefulness in any combat which might ensue.

As we drew near the excited dogs we found them tearing the bark from a scrubby live oak which clung to the mountain side.

"Must be a cat," said the hunter. He flashed his lantern into the tree-top, when "Crash!" an enormous yellow body flashed over our heads and landed far down the hill.

"Lion!" we all yelled, and a madly-excited mob of men and dogs started in pursuit.

"Hold on!" said the experienced hunter, as he wiped the dirt and per-

spiration from his face. "Wait till they tree again." And he calmly rolled a "Greaser cigarette" and began smoking, listening intently as the chase drew nearer the rocky mountain top.

The dogs broke out once more with that clamor which signifies "treed!"

Away we went—still up, up—slipping, stumbling, scrambling, getting our shins barked among the stiff manzanita times without number. But we heeded not our hurts, for the wild barking of the dogs, mingled with Billy's encouraging halloo, echoed down and across the valley and back, till the very heavens seemed filled with the racket.

The lion had come to bay in a large crevice which broke the face of the rock at the top of the inevitable shale slide. Slowly and with a great deal of exertion—to say nothing of pardonable profanity—clinging to an occasional bush or snag, we dragged ourselves within a few feet of the seat of war.

"Got to stir him up!" remarked the hunter and the contents of the heavy shot gun went plunging into the darkness. With a wild scream the maddened lion sprang from the cavern and stood for a moment in the dim lantern light enveloped in the sulphurous smoke.

Turning quickly toward a rock projecting some fifteen feet upward, the lion crouched and sprang; but, just as his feet left the rock the mountaineer's Winchester rang out and the desperately wounded beast struck short of the ledge and rolled back screaming and tearing at everything within reach.

Tip fled warily behind a bush; but Blucher with blundering zeal charged like a load of hay, followed by a fool tenderfoot who wanted to kill the lion with an axe. A fierce snarl—a thump—and old Blucher came end over end through the air striking the unlucky tenderfoot amidships when the whole aggregation rolled into a manzanita bush twenty feet below.

"Look out! He's going to spring again!" yelled Charlie. As I sat far down the hill and dug the dust out of my eyes I saw the long yellow body again rise into the air as it launched itself at the intrepid hunter. Billy made a splendid shot, for while the lion was in the air a bullet from the heavy 45 broke its neck.