

in ten is the fatal number equivalent to rejection. Immediately after an election the secretary writes to the successful candidate, inclosing a printed copy of the club-rules, and requesting prompt payment of the entrance-fees and annual subscription for the current year. When these are paid, and not till then, the newly-elected member is entitled to all the rights and privileges of his club. As may naturally be supposed, the entrance-fees and annual subscriptions of the various London clubs differ considerably in amount. The entrance-fees vary from forty to one hundred and fifty dollars. The lowest annual subscription is twenty-five dollars, the highest fifty dollars; in most clubs, however, it is not more than thirty.

The club system, if not peculiar to Great Britain, has yet attained there far greater importance than elsewhere. In America, until within a few years back, clubs were almost unknown; and even now, in our most wealthy city, New York, they hold but a very subordinate place in the social structure, compared with the clubs of London.

Of the New York clubs, the Union, established in 1822, is alike the oldest and the wealthiest. Its grounds and buildings cost over \$200,000. It has about five hundred members. One hundred dollars is charged as entrance-fee, and the annual subscription amounts to fifty dollars. Its president is Hon. John A. King, the present Governor of the State of New York. It counts among its membership many men of note in arts, literature, politics, and commerce. Bancroft, Washington Irving, Commodore Perry, the Astors, General Scott, F. B. Cutting, Charles O'Connor, and others, are members of the Union.

The Century Club is composed of authors, artists, and amateurs of letters and the fine arts. The entrance-fee is forty dollars, and the annual subscription twenty-four dollars. The number of members is limited to two hundred and fifty. Most of the best known American authors and artists are members of the Century: Bryant, Taylor, Kemset, Curtis, Bancroft, Butler, Church the painter, Darley, Gullian C. Verplanck—the last named being at present its president.

It may be of interest to note some of the rules and restrictions regarding club amusements in the United States. In the Union Club all games of hazard are prohibited. It is, however, permitted to play whist for as high a stake as five dollars per game of ten points, or two and a half dollars per game of five points. Billiards may be played for a dinner of the value of one dollar per game of a hundred points. The introduction of dogs is peremptorily prohibited. As might be supposed, smoking is allowed in all parts of the house except upon the first floor. No games are permitted to be played on Sunday. In most other respects the rules and regulations and management of the clubs of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston are very similar to those of their prototypes, the clubs of London.

THE GRIZZLY BEAR OF CALIFORNIA.

I, THE narrator of the wonderful things here-
I, in related concerning the grizzly bear of California, and which all will hearken to, whether they believe them or not—yes, you with grave incredulous smiles, you also will read them eagerly, in that close unhealthy den you call your office, where, in continually seeking money and learning, you lose yourself in unrealities, book matters, while, in fact, knowledge gathered from the open face of nature is the foundation of all you are seeking with such diligence at second hand; I, the narrator, a qualified believer in Gérard and Roualeyn Gordon Cumming, and in the genius but not in the sanity of that fantastic creature, the dandy hunter-philosopher Tousselet, have heard greater things than any which they have related. I have heard the crow, most intelligent of birds, conversing with his mates; gossiping and chatting, with as voluble and cunning intonations as a French milliner. You do not believe this; and yet, with interest, perhaps with a smile, you listen to it. It is pleasing to hear the most extravagant things said in a confident and quiet manner. "The lie," says a profound author, "in matters of hunting, should commence only beyond the limits of the possible." Do you then scoff at me, because I tell you that the crow, with organs of speech flexible enough to form well-sounding words in Latin, Greek, English, or even German, has a language of its own, with a vocabulary of expression, in which he discusses fluently all topics of corvine life and society?

The true hunter and naturalist "adores truth because he loves it." "He has felt that it was necessary to dress truth a little, to show her to better effect in a world of false modesty." "But how his respect for truth reveals itself through the slightest details of these ornaments with which he has adorned his idol." When he tells you, as I do, that the grizzly bear of California is a surgeon, and, when wounded, gathers leaves of the bush called "grease-wood" and forces them tightly into the wound; when I have related this, actuated as you are by a secret pride, hating to find intelligence in the brute, you rack your brains for an "explanation." Why not accept the fact, and let it produce such fruit as it will, of poetry or philosophy? You can never disprove it, and you are ignorant. Be content, then, to learn through the eyes and experience of others.

Along the coast of California, from the extreme southern tip, called Cape St. Lucas, to the Golden Gate, there is a continuous range of mountains, throwing out spurs, and advancing steep escarpments upon the sea. These are named the "Coast Range," and are still the chosen homes of the grizzly bear; who, by this selection of ground, commands on one hand the inner plains and valleys drained by those waters which flow out through the Golden Gate, exit of many rivers, and, on the other the ocean,

in whose tumbling and pitiless surf he delights to measure the gigantic force of his limbs.

Before the advent of Man it was the Bear who asserted sovereignty over the animal and vegetable kingdom. But the king of bears reigned in California, where nature has made all things vast, extended, and overwhelming. Plains, over which the eye wears itself with distances, green and interminable; a river with navigable arms, fed by all the snows of the Sierras, where large and solid streams plunge in unbroken falls over precipices thousands of feet in depth, into valleys where stand trees taller than cathedral spires, and more ancient than the Theban tombs.

The bay salmon is larger than the cod in the bays of California; whales of enormous size rise, like islands, near the shore; the bear attains the stature and double the weight of the bull. All things mark an epoch of grandeur and strength; the creative Angel who shaped this part of earth, in obeying the behest of the Supreme Mind, worked with the feeling of an Angelo, and swept his plastic hand over vast curves.

As if in compensation, the air has telescopic power, bringing near and magnifying remote objects. I dare not relate, at what incredible distances men, horses, and cattle are visible to each other in this magical atmosphere, which at once strengthens the limbs and intellectual faculties of man, while it obliges him to longer journeys and more extended views.

Excepting the sandy desert of the Colorado—natural boundary between Tropical and Northern America on the Pacific—the surface of this immense region is green for at least six months of the year—the winter, or season of rains. All detail of foliage, and the lesser beauties of the picturesque, are lost in chains of surface features whose single links cover hundreds of miles. For example, the insignificant "cattail," called *tsé*, covers plains where the eye finds no limit. No less vast, and seemingly illimitable, are the regions of the wild-oat.

Well do I remember the effect of the first view of those endless hills of the coast, when, after shipwreck, I climbed with hand and foot the crumbling face of the mountain. The sound of the heavy surf thundering at the base grew less and less distinct. My companions, faint with hunger, lagged and returned, one by one, and all perished. I alone, covered with the cruel bruises the rocks had given me in being dashed against them by the sea, reached the heights, and looked inland. Ridgy summits, weather-worn, battlemented with mouldering walls of rock, through whose embrasures peered now and then the red eyes and corrugated front of the wild bull, watching remote the movement of his old enemy, the bear, in the ravine; the steady rush of the northwest wind, beginning to bring the afternoon fog from the ocean. Over the hills, north, south, and east, waved every where the thin but nutritious herbage of the wild oat, spreading a gauzy veil of pale brown,

dry and withered to the eye, but sustaining countless herds, which seemed to crawl slowly, like companies of flies stiffened with cold, up steep hill-sides, geometrically lined and channeled by their parallel paths, like plowed fields that are grazing themselves afresh.

Vale beyond vale, interminable. Scaling from these, three successive swells of the mountain—watched always dangerously by the wild bulls, that, on the plain, would have attacked and trampled me to death, despising the man on foot as much as they fear him mounted—the sea-fog of the afternoon, growing momentarily denser and colder; nightfall, and dread of that terrible death in the wilderness, with its attendants—hunger, madness, and idiocy; . . . I rolled myself in my boat-cloak, and lay down on the slope of the mountain. Half sleeping, I heard the distant bark of a dog; it came nearer; and then a human voice; a moment after, the snuffing of the hound over my face and eyes. He rushed away silently, and I heard his bark below in the ravine, mingled with a mournful cry. A bear-hunter, riding slowly homeward through the mist, warned and led by the dog, found me there. He dismounted; and, without a word, I was raised up and placed in the saddle. I thanked him; and we moved on, for hours following steep and devious paths, the dog and horse snuffing the trail, until all at once we heard voices. The dog scours in advance; a light moves toward us; dark, Spanish faces surround me; and soon I am lying quiet and full of content, but wounded and sore, on the hard pallet of the herdsman, covered by his hospitable roof, and tended with the friendliest care.

My host was an Arkansas man—a bear-hunter, graduated in the school of the forest, with his diploma marked upon his body, in shape of ghastly scars. He was master of a cattle-ranch, and of a company of *vagabundos*, or native herdsmen. The fame of the grizzly bear of California, and not of the gold-diggings, had drawn him to these remote regions. He made the voyage of the Cape in 1845, and built a cabin of cedar logs in the "wild oats country," near San Luis Obispo. During two weeks of illness, caused by the hurts of my shipwreck, he and his Spanish people gave me every attention.

On the first day of my convalescence, I sat at evening in front of the house, overlooking the landscape. A green, irregular slope descended before me to the bed of a thin stream, beyond which was the *corral*—a large inclosure of cedar logs, called "red wood," into which the milk cows were driven each morning to nurse the calves. The hungry cry of three hundred calves, the anxious calling and bellowing of their horned kindred, sounded always all night until dawn. Then the people of the ranch—men, women, and children—thronged to the *corral* with milking-pails. The cows were let in, and the calves caught by the little boys with lassos, and their necks tied to the hind-leg of the mother, who then, under a pleasing maternal delusion, allowed herself to be milked.

Beyond the *corral* a plain, undulating, grassy, but parched with summer heats, led the gaze eastward to the blue line of remote mountains. The air was of a pleasant warmth, tempered by the overflow of the cool sea-wind; and the monotone of shrilling grasshoppers and locusts filled it with a soothing music. On the right a chain of hills, covered alternately with tall red-wood in cañons,* and groves of oak on the summits, stretched away into the distance. On the left another range, more soft and rounded, led toward the north; and the sides of these last were filmed with the wild cat. The *vagabonds* now picketed horses on the plain, or drove herds of wild cattle. Under an oak, removed from the ranch, a crowd were gathered, stripping hides from the carcasses of beavers.

The bellowing of the herds and the cries of the drivers, as they rode to and fro over the plain, through the level beams of sunset, reining their swift and docile horses with short turns to check the devious rush of the cattle, or throwing and winding the lasso, sounded remote and pleasing. For the first time I saw and understood the life of herdsmen—unprogressive and unchanged since the first tribe of Caucasians followed the first herds on the farther side of the Caspian.

I lay on a bench of cedar, my head pillowed on a Spanish saddle which glittered with silver embroidery. Over me a wide arbor of the celebrated grape of Los Angeles diffused its transparent shadows, the rich clusters hanging within reach, small, purple, full of aromatic juice, and without a core. I ate them at will, allaying thirst and hunger with this luscious and cooling fruit. My new friend and saviour, Colin Preston, the red-bearded hunter, was extended on a bear-skin on the cool earth beside me, dreamily revolving in his mind the fortune of the chase. Gradually he roused himself. The lines of conversation, thoughts coming forward for expression, formed about his eyes and mouth. He rose upon his elbow and spoke slowly, without accent or enthusiasm. Preston had been a scholar and a lawyer, and his talk was a mixture of the rude and polished. Cool, grave, imperturbable, with eyes so still and fierce they burned into the very soul, he might have been the lord of some barbarous primeval tribe.

Such men exist only on the borders of the New World; incapable of folly and careless of wealth; the Knights Paladin of the wilderness, for whom modern society has no name, no poem, and no place.

"They talk of bears," said Preston, fixing upon mine, with still regard, his large gray eyes; "of bears in Arkansas. I was bred to the bear as well as to the *lor*, and through ten seasons hunted on the Red River with men of the woods, 'bar' hunters of the border, who have all the forest wisdom. I have read, too, what has been written by the great hunters, but none

of them knew the bear of California. He is the sovereign of beasts; in strength, weight, endurance, and sagacity superior to the lion, and I doubt not has formerly destroyed some great and powerful tribe of lions on this continent."

"You are an enthusiast," said I. "You have dwelt so long among bears you fancy them the only wonders of creation."

"Last April," he continued, "I rode out, with my rifle and telescope, alone. Antonio, who should always go with me—and he is a good hunter, but a coward—Antonio was sick, or indolent, so I went alone. From the summit of the low hill on the left of yonder mountain I swept the view with my glass. In the midst of a plain covered with the wild clover, which is deep and close at that season (you can pluck the clover heads with your hand without bending from the saddle), I perceived a movement, and saw that it was a grizzly of enormous size rolling in the clover, with his paws playing stupidly in the air. The cattle on a hill-side not far distant were watching this movement, and a bull advanced toward it, drawn, it seemed to me, by curiosity. The wind carried away the scent of the bear."

"Do cattle distinguish all animals by the scent?"

"Men and the larger animals, when the wind is in their favor. But not as well as the deer."

"The bull drew gradually nearer to the bear, and the herd followed him, grazing as they went. He forced his way through the tall clover until he came within fifty yards, and bellowed, tearing up the earth. The bear moved less, only now and then rolling a little to stir the field. The curiosity of the bull now changed into anger; he came slowly up, snorting and bellowing, and at length stepped suddenly forward, and plunged at the bear, who caught him in his powerful arms and held him down."

"There was fifteen minutes of struggling and roaring, and the two immense beasts rolled over and over, crushing flat a wide area of the field. The herd gathered around, rushed upon them, and bellowed with rage and terror; but the bear never slackened his hold until the bull, exhausted, ceased to strive. Then up rose Bruin, light as a cat, and, striking out as a cat strikes, broke at one blow the shoulder of the bull. He fell as if dead, and the herd ran to the hills, groaning."

"I have been told that the bear is not a flesh eater."

"You shall hear. He stood over the carcass, and tore out the bowels, tasting with his tongue, and champing; but he did not bolt or gorge the flesh as tigers do. It was now the time to ride up and dispatch him. His eyes were smeared with blood, and his nostrils dalled with the strong odor of flesh. Leaving my horse, I crept through the clover, and planted a ball behind the shoulder. A bear shot through the heart falls dead."

"And if you had missed?"

"I seldom miss."

"You said 'seldom.' You should have said

* Gorges, or channels, which separate spurs or buttresses of mountains. The red-wood follows the moist channel of the cañon.

'never,' to be secure. That 'seldom' will one day interrupt you."

"Let us not fret ourselves about the 'one day.' To hunt bears you must hunt them."

"It is a passion."

"An ambition, rather. This region pleases me. There are bears larger, stronger, and more difficult to kill than the lions of Algiers. One of these will sometimes overtake a horse at speed. They are long-limbed, active, and full of cunning. As for their courage, they are seldom disheartened except by fatal wounds. The bear of this country resembles the man who hunts him, and it is this resemblance of character that gives interest to the chase."

"I heard Antonio telling you, yesterday, that a bear was made drunk?"

"Yes; you understood, then, Antonio's bad Spanish?"

"A little."

"We make large and dangerous bears drunk, when they have cubs in February, and are too savage. The bear goes to and from his den or cover—usually a hollow among rocks—by certain paths, called 'beats.' A bear will use the same beat for years, going by night on one beat, and in the day taking another, more circuitous. You will often find a tree fallen across the beat, or you fell one, and wait till the savage has examined the new barricade, and finding that it is not a trap is willing to climb over it. Then you make a hole in it with an axe, large enough to contain a gallon of rum and molasses. Bears are greedy of sweets. In countries where there is wild honey they will overturn all obstacles to get at it. Of sugar and molasses, and sweet fruits, strawberries, mulberries, and the like, they are passionately fond. The bear reaches the log; he pauses over the hole full of sweet liquor; examines it, tastes of it, drinks all at a draught, and is drunk. And what a drunkenness is that! The brute rolls and staggers, rises and even bounds from the earth, exhausts his enormous strength in immense gambols, and falls at last, stupefied and helpless, an easy prey to the hunter. We have killed many in this way, but it is treacherous, and I do not like it."

"How many bears have you killed in California in one season?"

"Seventy large bears, and twice the number of smaller ones. The cubs and young bear of the season are excellent eating, but a man must be hungry to eat the sinewy flesh of a full-grown grizzly."

"Two hundred and ten in ten years!"

"Yes, but they are scarcer now. When I came here first we saw them every day. Now we ride sometimes fifty miles to find a bear."

"I would like to join you by-and-by on one of these hunts."

"Be dissuaded from it. To shoot well with a heavy rifle, to have presence of mind, quickness of aim, good legs to carry you far and fast out of danger, a seat on horseback as if you had grown to the saddle, and, above all, knowledge of the grizzly, his habits and temper, are all

necessary. Bear hunting is sport only for those who set little value upon life."

"Is it true that they are taken with the lasso?"

"Antonio took a drunken bear with a lasso, and we tied and dragged him home; but the next morning he broke away, killed two horses, and escaped to the woods. We never venture upon them in that way unless they are drunk. I sometimes fancy the grizzly possesses a degree of human intelligence; for when he has resolved to kill a beeve he selects the best of the herd. A bear of large size will meet the rush of a bull, move aside, and kill him, as does the matador in the arena, with a passing blow."

"I have read somewhere that the bear is emblematic of the savage state."

"The grizzly is emblematic of the backwoodsman. He has a rough surgery of his own, his claws are large and efficient, like the axe and rifle. He has the least fear of man among the greater animals; his motions, seemingly slow, are really rapid; he is the contemptuous enemy of the Indian—the human wolf—and is generally more than a match for him. He loves rum and molasses, bread, fruits, and vegetables; pumpkins especially. In a pumpkin field he selects the largest, makes a hole in it, and sucks out the seeds and pith. Bears hunt singly, or in couples. Each fights on his own hook. Savages, on the contrary, run in crowds, place an ambush and rush all together, with onerics, like the wolf."

"Two men whom I know, one of them Dr. Clemens of this State—lately killed by a grizzly—were in this district bear-hunting three years ago. The bears had been destroying the pumpkins, and these men erected a wooden stage with a platform eight or ten feet high, in the middle of a field, with a wall or wickerwork of brush for an ambuscade, and from this point they watched the bears. The platform stood near a heavy fence of stones and timber. While they watched by moonlight they saw a large bear enter the field and come toward the platform. Dr. Clemens fired upon the bear; who instantly ran to the staging and overthrew it, tumbling our two hunters upon the ground. They escaped over the fence a good deal bruised and not a little frightened."

"I have seen bears in confinement quite tame. From the character you give of the grizzly it should be rather difficult to tame him."

"Not more than the bull, whom it is impossible to make harmless, with all your taming. I have seen a bear weighing twelve hundred pounds harnessed to a truck by a fellow who enjoyed such things, and he drew like an ox. This bear was taken when a cub and kept tame. The draught force of the full-grown bear is equal to that of a yoke of steers; but, like the backwoodsman, he will not endure beating. He has his points of honor. He is not cringing and treacherous like the tiger. In diet, too, he is human, preferring cooked meat to raw, and enjoys the savors of the kitchen. He is domes-

tic in his tastes, stays much about home, is a good parent, and friendly toward kindred. He plows and tears up the earth for roots, using his powerful claws. When acorns are ripe the grizzly grows fat and heavy—his belly drags along the ground. At such times it is easy to kill him; but even then he has a taste for flesh meat. We hunt them at night by the drag."

"How is that?"

"Fasten the entrails of a calf, or deer, to the end of a lasso, tie the free end of the lasso to the saddle, and ride across the country several miles, drawing it after you. Ride over the bear's 'beats,' or paths; bring the trail, finally, to the foot of an oak tree—such as you see on the hill-side yonder—where there is an open space around, and you can see and hear the bear as he approaches from a distance. Fasten the offal to the lower branch, just within reach—perhaps five feet from the ground."

"Night before last, while you were lying in bed here, Antonio and I, after preparing such a bait as that—though it is not acorn time now—took our places in an oak, just over the lower branch. It was late when we climbed into the tree, and we waited till the moon rose—near twelve o'clock—and no sign of a bear. See, then, how patient you must be in this kind of hunting."

"But would he not climb the tree and attack you?"

"Not at all; bears are not savages; they seldom attack without provocation."

"Would the bear, finding a trail of offal, know which way to follow it?"

"Yes. He judges, I suppose, by the appearance of the trail."

"I was seated on a branch, just over the offal, which offended my nose prodigiously. Antonio fixed himself—the coward—a little higher up, on the dark side of the tree. He has been a bear-hunter these twenty years, and afraid of nothing so much as a bear."

"Antonio is, perhaps, ambitious."

"Not a bit of it. A paltry coward, Sir—as cowardly as an Indian; but he hates the bear because he fears it, and follows the killing through malice, and with the ingenuity of a devil."

"Antonio was sleepy, and, in spite of my warnings, he would lay his head on the branch. In fact, we had been out three successive nights, and I found it difficult myself to keep awake, watching so long, and straining sight in the distance."

"A dusky object appeared moving toward us in the direction of the drag, and I spoke: in a whisper to Antonio. He woke up suddenly, and, losing presence of mind, fell over forward upon the ground, his rifle catching and hanging in the tree. The fall waked him very thoroughly, and, by way of accelerating his climb, I hinted, very slightly, that the bear would arrive in a few seconds. Antonio is a person for whose feelings I have a regard—a man, Sir, highly sensitive on the subject of bear. He ascended

the tree with astonishing ease and rapidity when he understood my hints—not caring to be found below by Bruin, with whom he had so many unsettled accounts."

"The bear came up the hill slowly, scenting the drag through the wild oak; but my sympathy for Antonio, and admiration of his quick climb, diverted me from the bear, and produced a violent disturbance of the risible muscles. 'Antonio,' said I, in a whisper, 'if the bear eats you, look below, as you ascend toward the gates of Paradise!'

"'Why must I do that, Señor?' whispered the shuddering Antonio."

"'Because, like children when they go to bed in the dark, you will see the ghosts of some hundreds of grizzly bears whom you have sent to the lower world ready to lay hold upon your feet; and, thereupon, you will so move St. Peter with admiration of your quickness in climbing the gate, he will let you pass without scruple, for the sake of laughter, among the saints.'

"'Ah, Señor, the bear is here!' whispered Antonio; and there he was, pressing to the foot of the tree."

"We had our rifles ready—Bruin was only thirty paces off when, to my utter amazement, over went Antonio a second time, rifle and all, and, striking the earth with a bound, fled into the darkness. The incident was more unexpected and ludicrous than any thing I had seen in hunting, and I sat upon the branch paralyzed and trembling with suppressed laughter. The bear paused a moment when he heard the fall, and then rushed forward and rose on his hams to seize the offal. I placed my rifle at his ear, fired, and saw him go down; but what with the kicking of the heavy gun, and my own unsteadiness, I, too, rolled off the branch, and fell heavily, striking my shoulder against the bear's head. Terrified now, in good earnest, I rolled myself off and ran—nor stopped till I was safely in the ranch. The bear was dead, or he would have followed me—I have known them overtake men when a portion of their head had been shot off, and with balls in the body. My left shoulder is still stiff and sore with that fall."

"I suppose the bears of the Rocky Mountains are larger and more dangerous than the grizzly. Were you ever east of the Sierras?"

"The brown bear of the Rocky Mountains is a formidable brute, and at some seasons of the year as vicious and destructive as the bear of California; but you will never find the grizzly east of the Great Desert, nor any brown bears on the Pacific coast."

Not many days after this conversation I was able to mount a horse, and from that time my strength returned rapidly. At length I took leave of my friend, who pressed me to return in the spring, and promised a full initiation into the mysteries of bear-hunting.

The remainder of that season and the winter I passed in San Francisco, and the February succeeding rejoined Preston on the ranch.

He was in fine health and spirits, and predicted good hunting.

Two weeks elapsed before we heard of a bear. One morning Antonio wakened us at daylight, and we rode fifteen miles to a cove or shingle, on the shore of the sea. The surf rolled in heavily; a cool, stiff breeze came from the northwest. We picketed our horses in a hollow among the sand hills, hidden from the beach; and then, Antonio leading the way almost on his hands and knees, we stole along to the edge of a sand ridge, and looking over saw two grizzlies; one very large, feeding on dead fish along the edge of a marshy inlet, the mouth of a mountain stream; the other, a small bear, not more than two years old, sunning itself at full length, like a lazy cat, in the shelter of the hill, seeming to watch the motion of the other, whom Antonio pronounced to be a female with cub. Preston pushed the sand up with his hands, so as to form a breast-work upon which to rest our rifles, the distance to the small bear being not more than a hundred yards.

I found myself trembling violently when I tried to take aim. All shot together, and the balls took effect under the shoulder. The bear rose to his feet with a tremendous roar, bounded into the air, and fell dead. We did not move however, not knowing what course might be taken by the large bear to avenge the fall of her companion. As soon as I had recovered presence of mind enough to take a view over the ridge, I saw her making off with long strides along the edge of the inlet toward the breakers. She pushed through the heavy surf, disappearing and reappearing as it rolled over her; and in a few minutes we saw her swimming straight out to sea, as if bound on a voyage to the Sandwich Islands.

Meanwhile Preston consulted with Antonio as to the proper mode of meeting her on the return. It was determined that we should go down to the shore and give her a broadside as she came in; hoping by this plan to disable her, at least, by a broken shoulder or a wound in the foot. If she did not fall at the first fire, we were to run to our horses among the sand hills, and follow her cautiously, getting each an occasional shot, and leading her to the steep sides of the hills.

During all this time Antonio, as Preston assured me was habitual with him, manifested excessive fear; his lips were ashy pale, and his face, naturally dark brown, became of a dirty chocolate color. How he could shoot correctly was a marvel; but that he did so I was satisfied by finding three balls in the body of the small bear, near together. He was a sinewy little man, past forty, with a small square head, and a trace of negro blood in his veins. Like all "greasers," he had a savage, unfinished look about the mouth, and while the bear was in sight his upper lip lifted itself nervously, with a horrid grin, showing a row of superb teeth, sharp, square, and white as pearls. This grin gave Antonio the appearance of a death's-head,

and was purely a manifestation of the fate he apprehended from his old enemy the bear. From a careful study of Antonio, I arrived at the conclusion that cowards with strong wills may be good soldiers.

While we were standing about fifty yards apart, waiting for the return of the grizzly, who was now swimming slowly toward us, rising and sinking on the long waves, I began to be disturbed with a violent rumbling in the bowels, as though attacked with cholera. Subsequent inquiries satisfied me that this was a very ordinary symptom of inexperience among bear-hunters, and was a moral much more than a physical phenomenon. Nature, like a kind and anxious mother, makes an effort to rearrange the interior of the body, so as to put it in the best condition to escape from danger. Not to run away is a question of will, like standing up to be shot at in a duel. And by the same token a man who can await the coming of a grizzly will receive the fire of an enemy without flinching. Antonio looked alternately at the bear and at Preston, and if his master had backed or yielded, I believe he would have scooped away like a deer.

The bear paused and floated on the sea a while when she understood that we were waiting for her coming with hostile intent. She was old, cunning, and had doubtless many balls in her clumsy carcass, and understood the nature of a rifle. At length she began to strike out boldly, making straight for Preston, who was on my right. I had consequently to shoot to the right, which is difficult either with the pistol or rifle. She struck ground about one hundred yards from us, and I raised my gun; but Preston called to me not to fire till the bear was in the last breaker. I could but just hear his voice above the thunder and simmer of the sea. And now she came on with a rush, charging upon our centre. I saw out of the corner of my right eye that Preston had raised his rifle, and I did the same. The sea drew back, and the huge mass of hair and muscle began working up the beach, ready for a charge as soon as it could overcome the undertow. The rifles cracked successively; the bear turned and looked at her flank, gave a great roaring cry and sprang forward. Antonio darted up the shore like a deer. I rushed toward the sand hills, and looking behind me an instant saw Preston lying at full length flat upon his face on the edge of the sea, and the bear coming after my blessed self with a limp in the left fore paw, but making excellent time. Fear lent wings to my feet, and being a good runner, in five minutes I was lost among the sand hills. A craggy tree, jutting out from the side of a slope, presented the idea of security, and in less time than it takes to write this I was hidden close in the middle of its wind-worn branches. To breathe and reload the rifle were the first acts dictated by nature and the small remains of reason left by fear.

More than an hour I remained in the tree, and during this interval had plenty of leisure

to look quietly around upon the face of nature in this desert and desolate wild. The tree stood in the centre of an indentation of the mountains occupied by sand hills. Inland I recognized the bluff we had descended in approaching the shore. By the direction of the wind, which blew with even force from the northwest, I made out the points of the compass.

Descending from the tree and keeping the rifle cocked, with a sharp look-out, I moved slowly toward the shore, and looking northward saw my two companions mounted and riding away along the beach. Preston looked back and waved his *sombrero*, and in fifteen minutes' time we saluted each other; Antonio being now quite bold and secure, and ready to laugh at me for running away. Preston, on the contrary, gave me his warmest congratulations, and confessed that he had not expected to see me again. He said that the bear knocked him over with her broken paw, and then pushed on in pursuit of myself. After skinning the small bear, on our way homeward we found the horse I had ridden lying dead, where he was picketed, with his bowels torn out, but saw nothing of the wounded grizzly.

This adventure gave me a distaste for bear-hunting. Preston urged another trial—he praised my coolness and presence of mind. "You shoot well," said he; "you ride tolerably, and have a good pair of legs."

"Some men," I replied, "are born bear-hunters; others have bear-hunting thrust upon them. I am of the latter class."

He laughed. "You must take home with you a bear cub of your own catching. I know of an old she-bear who has had cubs every year in a cave about twenty miles from here; you can see the crest of the mountain where she ranges yonder toward the southeast. We will go there in a few days and bring away the cubs."

Antonio lay upon his back on the earthen floor while Preston talked about the cubs, and I saw his meagre visage relax into a smile. It is astonishing how small a matter will decide one at such a moment. I have known men naturally cowards jeered into the "forlorn hope;" but I never believed, until that moment, that the smile of such an insignificant poltroon as Antonio could have sent me a step out of my predetermined path. Three days after we selected good horses, and set out in search of the old bear and her cubs.

The horse I rode was of the California breed, which has been acclimated for two centuries on the Pacific coast. The original stock was taken, I suppose, from Andalusia to Mexico, in the seventeenth century. We rode rapidly, ambling, loping (the gait of the wolf), and running, but our horses never broke into a trot, except for an instant, when checked on a descent. Each of us wore spurs, originally gilt, the rowels three or four inches in diameter, but not sharp, like the small, cruel English spur. They were firmly fastened to the heel and instep, and served a

double purpose: to guide and urge the horse, and to prevent the rider from being thrown from his seat by a sudden swerve or turn. We rode furiously up hill and down, and over all kinds of country; through valleys where the water courses were shaded with willows, and up long hill-sides, seemingly miles in length, covered knee-deep with blooming malvas, *asclepias*, and a variety of low annuals, such as I have seen in gardens in New England; but which here spread a carpet of orange, red, and yellow blossoms, pretty enough, but after a time wearisome by reason of monotony.

From the summit of a long mountain, bare of trees, we began galloping down, it seemed to me, a declivity of twenty degrees, on a ridge, or natural road, not more than thirty feet wide, with precipices on either side. Far down I saw a valley of sycamores, at the foot of the mountain; but this terrible plunging ride almost deprived me of my senses. I could only cling to the saddle and follow my leaders, who seemed very much at their ease.

"A beautiful run for the horses, that ridge," said Preston, reining up at the bottom, two miles from the summit.

"Yes, but there is not a jockey in the Eastern States who could have been tempted for a thousand dollars to run down as you did, making me follow."

"An affair of habit," said Preston. "We gallop our horses up and down hill, and they never stumble; have you noticed the breed?"

"It has some good points; but the neck is hollow and weak, the breast narrow, and the frame too small. I think them bad horses for any other service than the one you put them to—I mean hunting bears and cattle with the lasso."

"Good for little else," said Preston; "but the greasers seek no other qualities in a horse but to mind the spur and bridle, make a quick turn, and never stumble. They are tyrannical and cruel with their horses, break their spirits in training, and the eighth year they are used up and unserviceable. The horse I ride was broken in a week, exhausted himself, is only five years old, and looks ten. California is a horse country, the finest in the world; but the greasers have ruined the breed. In herds the poorest naturally outnumber and spoil the better class of horses."

Chatting about horses we entered a valley of sycamores, and selected a place of encampment for the night. Antonio built a fire of dead wood and brush, and we roasted pieces of jerked beef over the coals, using a stick for a toasting fork. It was now noon. Preston took his rifle and rode away. In about three hours he returned, dragging the entrails of a deer behind him, but stopped and fastened the drag to a tree about sixty yards from the encampment. He then informed us that he had crossed the beat of a large bear about two miles off, followed it to a ledge of rocks, and saw three cubs sunning themselves on a flat stone, but no sign of the old one.

"Why did you not bring away the cubs?" I asked, innocently.

My companions looked at each other, as much as to say, "What does he know of bears?"

"Had I taken the cubs," said the hunter, "the mother, who is never long absent, would have discovered her loss before nightfall. She would then be the attacking party instead of ourselves, and would kill one of us, or one of our horses—which is the same thing, as she could easily overtake a man on foot—or tire out the horses on the long ridge yonder, catching us on the other side. A man who steals bears' cubs is much surer to suffer than one who kills a traveler on the highway."

We resolved to remain quiet the afternoon. The horses were picketed in a bushy meadow, where there was fresh grass. Preston and I lay down and slept, while Antonio kept watch. At sundown I was awakened by the howls of wild beasts. I opened my eyes and saw Antonio in the tree overhead, and Preston kicking me to wake up.

I sprang to my feet, took my rifle, and followed him across the meadow. The horses had broken away. An eighth of a mile farther on was a waterfall; and with the sounds of the torrent came mingled the growls of two wild beasts, alternate and furious. We moved cautiously along the channel, pushing aside willows and grape vines that embowered the sparkling waters, till we reached the fall and could look over. The torrent plunged foaming down a declivity of thirty feet into a ravine filled with a green, transparent pool of water, over which had fallen a large tree, making a bridge with its trunk.

On the right hand, squatted on one end of the bridge, was a small, male grizzly, and opposite to him, at the other end, a full-grown panther, who was tearing up the bark of the trunk, and gathering and relaxing herself as if for a spring. The alternate roaring of these infuriated beasts filled the valley with horrible echoes.

We watched them a minute or more. The bear was wounded, a large flap of flesh torn over its left eye, and the blood dripping into the pool. My companion bade me shoot the tiger, while he took charge of the bear. We fired at the same instant; but, instead of falling, these two forest warriors rushed together at the centre of the bridge, the bear rising and opening to receive the tiger, who fixed her mighty jaws in the throat of her antagonist, and began kicking at his bowels with the force of an engine. At the instant both rolled over, plunged, and disappeared. We could see them struggling in the depths of the pool; bubbles of air rose to the surface, and the water became dark with gore. It may have been five minutes or more before they floated up dead, and their bodies rolled slowly down the stream.

Antonio had some difficulty in catching the horses, which he found feeding in a little green valley a mile distant from our encampment. It was midnight before he returned and we could

lie down to sleep. It was my turn to keep watch while my companions slept. The moon rose about one o'clock. I paced backward and forward through the sycamores, listening with nervous attention for the footsteps of wild beasts. A deer walked dreamily into the glade, glared at me with his green, phosphorescent eyes, and glided away. Sometimes I seemed to hear footsteps remote, and tales of Indian ambuscades flitted through my memory. But there were no Indians here. The footstep of the bear is soft and rolling. He treads upon the heel and wrist, and drags and sways himself along. The impression of his foot in soft earth is like that of a large human hand.

At the first streak of the morning I roused Antonio and lay down to sleep. When I awoke the sun was two hours high. Antonio had skinned the bear and panther. We then took breakfast in the manner of hunters, after which Preston meditated:

"The small bear yonder," said he, "at the Falls, was mate of the old she-bear. It is well to have him out of the way. He was keeping guard against the panther, who is quite as fond of bear's cub as we are. We have next to kill the mother, for I see no possibility of escape if we carry off the cubs while she is alive."

"Take two of them," I suggested, "and leave the other to amuse her."

"Too cunning for that," replied the hunter. "Whatever be the talent of other animals, bears can count; they know each cub, and will always save the pet where there is a choice."

"It strikes me then, my friend, that we are under a necessity of killing this troublesome she-bear, who interferes so impertinently with our arrangements for the cubs whom we intend to remove and bring up in civilized society. She is a civilizer, with injurious tendencies to isolation and familism."

"In regard to our necessity," replied Preston, "you have spoken wisely and like a true hunter. As for the words 'civilizer' and 'familism,' I do not know their meaning; but I foresee that the killing of this brute is to give us trouble, and we must go about it, reconciled to every possibility."

"She is in no humor for fresh meat," I observed. "Our drag has either not been discovered or she neglects to follow it."

"I explain that by the presence of the panther, who may have prowled about here several days, hoping to carry off a cub. To prevent this the mother keeps herself near home, and will not follow the trail."

"In that case have we to begin the attack?"

"Of course. But let us first see that the rifles are clean and in good order."

At the word he began unscrewing the lock of his rifle. In half an hour we had cleaned the guns; and at three hours after noon were ready for the march. We made our approaches up the hill in three lines, converging upon the den of the bear. This was a correct military disposition, much better than any I saw in Ni-

caragua. I took the left and Antonio the right of Preston. We advanced on horseback, moving up a hill with gentle slope, through an open grove of large oaks, and could now see the front of rock under which was the cave of the bear; when Preston gave the signal to halt.

"She is coming," he said, in low voice, and at the same moment I saw both my companions raise their rifles. The cave may have been one hundred and fifty yards distant; an interval of fifty yards between myself, Preston, and Antonio, placed the bear as she approached under a cross-fire upon both flanks. I spurred my horse forward a few steps, and saw the huge beast coming slowly down the hill. We fired almost together. My horse trembled violently and snorted, but did not move until I had fired; but then wheeled suddenly and dashed off to the left, bringing my breast, after a run of sixty or seventy yards, in violent contact with the extreme branch of an oak, which brushed me from the saddle like a fly. At any other time the force of such a blow would have made me insensible; but so intense was my excitement, I can not even remember how I rose to my feet. Glancing along through the oak openings, I saw Antonio swinging by his hands from a branch, up which he was deliberately climbing, his horse scouring away through the forest after mine. The bear, wounded in front and in both flanks, had fallen back upon her haunches not thirty paces from Preston, who had wheeled his powerful horse to the left flank, my own position, and was whirling the lasso, which the next moment flew over the head and shoulders of the bear, and in less time than it requires to read this was turned on the bole of an oak-tree a dozen paces from the bear, and Preston's horse pulling at it with frantic energy.

When the hairy savage found herself encumbered by a noose, tightening sharply and powerfully around her body and forefeet, she rose upon her hind legs with a tremendous roar and made a dash at Preston; but held back by the radius of the lasso, rolled over and over almost touching the hind legs of his horse, who looked back at the hairy avalanche near his heels, and made a terrified bound forward, drawing the bear of course nearer, perhaps within ten feet of the tree. Preston still, however, maintained the requisite control over his steed, and wheeling to the right rode around, making one turn of the lasso about the tree, turned the horse to a dead halt, and began reloading his piece. It was fortunately a breech-loading gun, and could be charged in a few seconds.

Meanwhile a crash from the tree and another roar and bound of the hampered bear, who had lain quiet for a moment, to recover the strength which she was fast losing—the dark blood pouring from her mouth in torrents—showed that Antonio had not been idle. By this time, with some bungling, I had driven a charge home in the barrel of my own awkward, old-fashioned piece. Preston, in a sharp, clear voice, which even now rings in my ears, called

out to me: "Shoot quick, and then take to a tree; the lasso is breaking." I ran to the left of the bear, came within ten feet of her, and aimed at the head. At the same instant she rose again, roaring; the lasso burst with a sharp sound; I fired wild, and turned to run, but the beast fell along dead upon the ground; by singular good fortune my chance shot had sent a ball through her heart. Not trusting to appearances, I rushed to the nearest tree and swung myself up by a depending branch with marvellous agility, climbing from branch to branch much higher than was necessary.

With the breaking of the lasso, Preston's horse bounded away; but he presently succeeded in turning him, and coming close to the bear made the event of the battle sure with another ball through the enemy.

When Antonio saw that the bear was dead, he gave a shout and dropped off his branch upon the ground like a ripe pear. Preston called to me to come down, which I did with some difficulty, because of the bruise on my chest. The pain of this bruise was severe, and followed me a long time after, but I did not feel it while ascending the tree.

As we stood looking at the dead bear, Preston attempted to dismount, but found it impossible to do so, his right thigh being severely bruised by the lasso, which pressed upon it with the entire force of the horse in his last desperate spring. We lifted our companion from the saddle, and laid him down fainting and helpless. Antonio then took his master's horse, and went in search of our runaway steeds. Meanwhile, leaving my friend somewhat relieved by a draught of rum and water from a hunting-flask, I went up to the rock, and found the three cubs sleeping quietly in a heap like kittens.

Antonio came back in high spirits with the two horses after an hour's search, and presently building a fire of dry sticks, we roasted some jerked beef, and after a hearty meal, lay down to sleep about sundown, using our saddles for pillows. At daylight we awoke, and, after skinning the bear, secured the cubs and skin upon Antonio's horse, and helping Preston into the saddle went over to the old encampment. Here we packed the two other skins, and made the best of our way to the ranch, Antonio leading his own horse by the bridle.

Preston was laid up by this accident, and during his confinement I had an opportunity of requiting some of his former attentions to myself. His conversation had always been intelligent and pleasing, but became varied and delightful while he was confined to his couch. Conversation, especially story-telling and the relation of characteristic anecdotes, is an art which flourishes in perfection only where there is leisure and the buoyancy of exuberant animal spirits. In remote and desert places we find few men of wit, and none of that class who make the merit of conversation depend on choice of words or oddity of expression. Mimicry, on the other

hand, and the gift of describing in compact, rough-hewn, picturesque sentences, are the talents of the Indian and the border man. With this, a cool manner in speaking of the most frightful dangers, and a power of depicting natural scenery by simple, unadorned description—saying no more than is required to place the objects before the eye—were the traits of conversation which, in Preston, held me motionless for hours of each day.

He spoke often to me of Colonel William Butts, of San Luis Obispo, who had been wounded in a hand-to-hand fight with a bear, in the spring of 1853. Colonel Butts was educated in the office of Colonel Benton, of Missouri; entered the army, and served with distinction under Scott, and then passed into the border service as a commander of mounted troops in the Indian territories. Growing weary of the half-idle life of the army, he removed to California, practiced law, owned a cattle-ranch at San Luis Obispo, and a newspaper at Los Angeles; keeping up the old habit of seeking danger for its own sake by an occasional bear-hunt. Preston was enthusiastic when he spoke of Butts, whom he regarded as a man, born soldier and hunter, with equal qualities of action and command. He described him as of medium height, rather slight in person, with an eye betokening great courage and self-control. He had had eight or ten years' experience of war in Mexico and on the Plains, and knew the interior of the continent like a garden. "This man," said Preston, "if he be still living, is the best example of a Missourian I have met with. People of his kind are usually rough; but Butts is quiet, correct, and agreeable, both in manners and conversation.

"On the 29th of March, 1853, Colonel Butts—then on his ranch at San Luis Obispo—was making preparations for a voyage to San Francisco, and thence to the eastward. An old man, named Pacheco, who resembles Antonio in every particular except age, came into the house, and said that he had wounded an old she-bear, who had been known for several years in the neighborhood. She had made a spring at Pacheco, and caught his hand. Fearing to miss the steamer, Colonel Butts at first refused to go; but on the assurance of the old hunter that the bear was close at hand and badly wounded, he took his knife and rifle, and started on horseback to make a finish of the hunt.

"They rode together to the summit of a hill near the ranch, but finding that the bear had gone down a ravine on the other side, they followed the trail. The brushwood and briars were almost impassable in the ravine. About half-way down the bushes forced them to the edge of a deep gully, which the horses could not get over. Colonel Butts then tied his horse and crossed the ravine, Pacheco forcing his way down through the bushes on the opposite side. After they had gone on a hundred paces or so, the Colonel reached an open space on the edge of the steep side of the gorge, and fearing they

might fall unawares upon the grizzly, he called out to Pacheco to stop.

"He then went to the edge of the ravine, which was a water-way trenched in the soft earth, and while he was looking over, the bank caved in under his feet, and he fell into the gully. Fearing that the concealed enemy might choose that moment for attack, he rushed up the bank, and at the same instant looking back, saw the bear coming behind close upon his heels—man and bear reaching the height at the same instant. Pacheco, who sat upon his horse on the other bank, and saw this movement, did not fire. He seemed to be paralyzed with fear.

"Colonel Butts carried a gun with a hair-trigger that required to be 'set'—a bad instrument for a hunter. Unfortunately, he had forgotten to set the trigger. The bear, as he turned upon her, seized the gun in her jaws and bit it, bending the barrel like a leaden rod. He jerked away the gun, however, and broke it over the head of the bear, who, at the same instant, seized his left leg in her mouth. Colonel Butts fell forward upon her, and seizing her wool with a strong grasp, the two rolled over and over down the bank of earth to the bottom of the ravine.

"The enormous weight of the animal drove the breath out of his lungs, and he became insensible; but was instantly roused by the surgical aid of Bruin, who retained her hold upon the leg, and now sat upon her haunches deliberately chewing and shaking it as a dog shakes a rat. Just as his senses began to return, the bear, who was suffering from the wound Pacheco had previously given her, let go the leg and walked slowly down the ravine.

"Colonel Butts now called out to his terrified follower to fire, but he did not do this; and the wounded grizzly, exasperated afresh by the sound of a human voice, turned and came back. Raising himself and leaning upon his left hand, Colonel Butts drew a long hunting-knife and awaited the second attack with sullen determination. The thought flashed over his mind that if he could cut out an eye of the grizzly, she would again retire, and Pacheco might by that time recover his aim and courage. The idea was a good one. As she advanced he struck at the right eye and cut it out. The enemy fell back, the eye hanging from the socket, and again turned and moved down the gully. A third time Colonel Butts called upon his follower to shoot, but without avail; and the bear, startled as before by the voice, wheeled and made another charge.

"'It is all over with me,' thought the hunter, 'unless I can cut out the other eye.' On came the bear, jaws open, and roaring. Again the knife smote sharply in the hunter's sinewy hand, but glancing upon the heavy brow of the beast, sank deep into the right side of the neck, and severed the carotid artery. The wounded brute pushed over and again seized the broken leg and crunched it; the blood spouted from the artery over the head and eyes of the hunter,

blinding him so that he could not see to strike another blow. He fell back as if dead, passing his left hand over his eyes to wipe off the blood, and when he again opened them the bear had retired a few steps, faint, and bleeding from the mouth and throat.

"His evil genius suggested to him to call again upon the wicked coward, Pacheco, commanding him to shoot; but the sound of the voice, as before, only animated the dying rage of the bear, who now made her final charge, but as she came on, her hind-quarters fell, through weakness. She pushed forward, moaning with fury, and Colonel Butts, animated by a shadow of hope in the midst of despair, put out both hands, and seized her by the thick wool on each side of the head. In this attitude she pushed him along over the ground two lengths or more, and staggered and crawled over him, when, with a long reach and vigorous repeated thrusts, he laid open her belly, striking in the knife to the handle, and drawing it forward until the bowels of the bear fell out and dragged along the ground. This was the last act of the bloody drama; the bear turned again, seized the back of his head in her mouth, biting away a portion of the scalp and the right ear, and then rolled over and died.

"When the bear crawled over him the last time, Colonel Butts lost his sight with the torrents of gore that poured from the animal. Her huge weight, treading and dragging over him, exhausted his little remains of strength.

"When Pacheco saw the bear fall and die, he got off his horse, came down into the ravine, took up the mangled and exhausted hunter, and bearing him to a spring, washed the blood from his face, so that he could see. Pacheco wished to leave him and go home for a litter, but Colonel Butts had still force enough left to cling to the saddle, and actually rode home in that condition. Six months after he was going about with a cane, but a wound from the bear's tooth had paralyzed the left side of his face; nor did the injured leg, so often broken, recover quite its natural solidity. Had not the bear been weakened with loss of blood, her last bite would have crushed the head of the hunter like an egg-shell."

"Did you ever talk with Pacheco about this fight?"

"No; but Antonio has questioned him. He reports that Butts did not seem larger than an infant beside his huge antagonist, and that, when the brute fell upon him, he disappeared; nothing was visible but a writhing mass of blood and hair, in the midst of which Pacheco could only see the rapid gleams of the knife."

"What excuse does Pacheco give for not firing?"

"A very shrewd one; that, if he had fired again and wounded the bear, his master would have had no chance for life; and that Butts's determination to kill the bear, at all hazards, was the cause of his extreme suffering and danger. He reports that each time the Colonel

called to him to fire, his voice sounded clear and ringing, as if he were ordering a charge of cavalry. Of such stuff are hunters made."

"Whose valor do you respect most—a Gérard's and a Butts's, or the courage of a bear?"

"In beasts the body fights, in man the soul."

A STRAY HOUSE.

"HAVE you seen any house going along here?" was shouted suddenly at me through the darkness by some one whom I could not see. But before I had enough recovered from my surprise to answer, a boat drove upon the wet turf at my feet, and the speaker, the headmost of two stalwart oarsmen, half-turning upon his seat, eagerly repeated his odd question. A house is not the most remarkable thing in the world, yet the inquiry was both natural and to the point; and not long before I had seen "ary house" go past, and in a most undignified and tumultuous hurry too.

"I say, mister! Have you seen any house go past here?"

"John Barnard, is that you?" I answered, now first recognizing the voice.

"Mr. Truax?" cried he, excitedly, knowing me in turn. "Yes, Sir, and Lifset."

That is, his brother, Eliphalet Barnard.

"I did see one," I continued, answering his question. "You don't say the old house is off?"

"Yes. For God's sake jump in, Mr. Truax!"

I remembered the rapids and the bridge far below, my knowledge of the river and boatman's skill and strength, the imminent risks into which the sturdy but inexperienced brethren were about plunging; and stepping lightly past them to the stern, I seated myself, took a steering oar, and, without a further word, we glided backward, turned short about, and with powerful, steady pulls, the sharp skiff shot away through darkness, rain, howling wind, and boiling, roaring, muddy flood-water.

While we drive down the stream, I may briefly explain the emergency. The Connecticut River, on which we were afloat, was swelled by a flood—terrible, sudden, and extensive beyond any recorded in memory or history. The house in which the Barnards lived had stood in the level meadow which reached back a little way from the Great River, as the neighbors call it, upon the banks of a small brook, entering the river in the town of Suffield, Hartford County, and near the Massachusetts line. Their father was dead; and they, together with their sister—who, however, had only recently returned from some years' absence as pupil or teacher at various schools—were managing the farm, and caring for their old and bedridden mother. Indeed, the bodily and mental infirmities of old Mrs. Barnard might well be counted as the cause of our night expedition; for, as the young men soon informed me, she had obstinately refused to leave the house in which she had been born, and where all her life had been passed. It was to please her that they had foregone their