



YOUNG GRIZZLES AT PLAY.

## BEARS AND BEAR-HUNTING.

THE Bear is the largest and most formidable animal of our continent. His appearance is familiar with every one, he being a sort of pet in civilized society, and an object of attention to all well-disposed persons. "Cuffy"—for such is his *soubriquet* among hunters—is a comical animal, and most of his actions, if viewed from a point of safety, are well calculated to cause a smile and awaken interest. From his peculiar formation, he walks upright with ease, and his fore-legs, which are very long, he uses as arms. He carries his food to his mouth with his paws, and his most effective mode of destruction is an angry embrace. The black bear obtains his full size between the age of seven and eight years, and has been killed weighing six hundred pounds.

The grizzly bear is pre-eminently the monarch of the American forests, and the largest beast of prey in the world. He is entirely without a rival in mere physical strength, and obtains the enormous weight of twelve hundred pounds. The most reliable authorities mention specimens nine feet in length, with a hind foot eleven and three quarter inches long and seven inches wide, exclusive of the gigantic talons, which exhibit a naked surface larger than the fingers of the human hand. This monster seldom attacks the hunter, unless challenged to fight. All animals become his prey; the heavy buffalo he crushes up in his arms, and bears away as a prize. The wolf-packs, which are the terror of the great prairies, flee from his presence, and a hundred of them will leave their bloody repast, that the grizzly may appease his appetite from their spoils.

The young cub of the familiar black bear is exceedingly attractive; a couple of these mischievous creatures confined together form a source of inexhaustible amusement. Some

years since we were for days confined to a Western steamer, and it was rarely that the cubs, which were among the "deck passengers," did not have an admiring audience witnessing their playful antics, wrestlings, and superb "ground and lofty tumbings." In a wild state, if in distress, they can sometimes be heard giving utterance to the most pitiful cries. In one of the frequent overflows that inundate portions of Louisiana, a community was once alarmed with the fearful wailings, as was supposed, of children suffering in "the swamp." Torches were obtained, and a careful search commenced, and after innumerable adventures, "by flood," of the humanely-disposed, two little cubs were discovered, buried up in the hollow of a tree, and locked in each other's arms—real abandoned "babes of the wood." The old mother had either been drowned or shot, and her sooty orphans, finally overcoming their instinctive fears, poured forth their sorrows upon the evening air.

The Eastern nations, from the earliest times, seem to have had an exaggerated idea of the character and habits of Bruin. Daniel the prophet compared the Persian monarchy to the bear, as indicative of its brutality and rapaciousness. Upon ancient sculptures there is found, we believe, no representation of the bear, although almost every other animal can be discovered among the still bright pictures of the tombs of ancient Egypt, and even among the recently-explored remains of Nineveh; yet the Old Testament represents that "two she-bears" destroyed the children who scoffed at the age and infirmities of the prophet. Of all beasts, the she-bear with her young is the most savage, and in the pursuit of food most utterly indifferent to danger. Popular stories, which have that immortal existence for which no one can account, represent the bear as not only fond of

human beings as food, but as selecting, with malicious satisfaction, the persons of young girls remarkable for their beauty and innocence. The truth is, that Bruin has no really bad qualities, except what are the result of circumstances not of his choosing; no very elevated characteristics, for he is commonplace in his ambition. No inhabitant of the wood, undisturbed, would lead a more respectable life than the bear; it is therefore unjust to reproach him with qualities that he does not possess, and it is calculated to profane zoology, if you ascribe to him virtues to which he never aspired.

Among "the mound builders" who inhabited this continent, and passed away long before the progenitors of the present race of Indians took possession of their places, there existed a high veneration for the bear; and as they entertained the singular custom of erecting tumuli in the form of animals and birds, there still exist, in Wisconsin and other places of the "Great West," mounds in the shape of the bear, measuring, in some cases, sixty feet in length. It is possible that these ancients, as is the case with our present Indians, used these designations to distinguish particular tribes and families, and that the shape of their "totem" was selected to form their burying-places, and the mounds referred to were those in which reposed members of the nation of the "Great Bear."

The bear is universal throughout almost the whole of our continent, and is found not only among the eternal snows of the North, but as far south as the swamps of Florida. Cold countries, however, are most genial to its existence, and mountain fastnesses for its safety. Among our aboriginal inhabitants, particularly those residing in the vicinity of the Great Lakes, the bear was held in great veneration. Believing, as they did, that all animals as well as men had spirits, they gave to Bruin a sort of homogeneous sympathy, and when preparing to hunt him, purified themselves by fastings and incantations. They also received their warriors who had been upon a successful hunt with almost as much ceremony as if they had just returned in triumph from an enemy's country, and appeared to be never satisfied with making propitiatory sacrifices to the manes of the dead. The title of "the Great Bear" was one of exceeding honor, and the form of the animal, more frequently than any other, occurs in their rude sculptures and hieroglyphical paintings. Directly after the conquest of Canada by the British, an Englishman, who endeavored to establish a fur trade among the Indians, relates the following illustrative incident:

He states that, while himself living a savage life, on one occasion he observed, on the trunk of an enormous pine-tree, the marks made by a very large bear. This information was communicated to the Indian family in which he lived, and the proposition made to cut the tree down and kill the bear. After two days' hard work with rude axes the tree was brought to the ground; from an opening at the top a bear of

extraordinary size leaped out upon the snow and was shot.

The moment the bear was dead the Indians commenced stroking the body with their hands, and kissing it, and begging a thousand pardons for taking its life, and putting the fault upon the Englishman and his gun. After the animal was cut up and taken to the lodge, its head was adorned with trinkets, such as silver arm-bands, and wristlets, and bits of wampum, and laid upon a scaffold set up for its reception; while near the nose was placed, as a propitiatory sacrifice, a large quantity of tobacco.

The succeeding morning preparations were made for a great feast; pipes were lit, and smoke was blown into the nostrils of the bear, to appease its anger. At length, the feast being ready, one of the chiefs commenced a speech, as if he were speaking of his own relations and departed companions, but pleaded the necessity of killing as an unavoidable misfortune. The speech being ended, every one partook of the flesh, and even the head was finally taken down from the scaffold and consigned to the kettle.

The home of the grizzly bear is generally confined to the wilds of the Rocky Mountains and the lone wastes of California, yet there can not be a doubt that a solitary specimen has occasionally reached the Atlantic coast. A tradition existed among the New York Indians that some three hundred years ago, a huge monster, which they termed the "Naked Bear," most horrible to behold, and possessed of *sawed claws*, as large as a man's finger, established himself somewhere among the head-waters of the Hudson, and occasionally falling upon an unprotected town, would destroy with impunity women and children. The hunters who pursued this monster invariably fell victims to their temerity, unless there was a river or lake at hand, when they could escape by swimming. So long as game was plentiful the scourge was comparatively harmless, but as soon as that failed him, he made war upon the people; and the "warriors" finally met and consulted for his destruction. After a severe battle, in which a number of persons were sacrificed, he was slain; his head was cut off, and carried in great pomp through the principal villages, and many warriors of the neighboring tribes came to view the trophy and admire the conquerors. The claws being naked, and as large as an Indian's finger, show that this traditinary creature was undoubtedly a grizzly bear, which having wandered from its native haunts, had, to the terror of the surrounding country, settled in the peaceful vicinity where it created so much havoc, and by its destruction there, caused so much glory to be shed over the now-forgotten tribe of Mahicanna Indians.

In the first settling of the New England States, bears were quite numerous, and they still exist in great abundance in the northern parts of Maine; but we hear very little said of them in the chronicles of the times. It would seem that the sturdy old Puritans found no leisure for the



THE BEAR AT BAY.

amusements of the chase, and having their attention so exclusively occupied by a more savage foe, the Indian, they must have slaughtered the bear without deeming the exploit worthy of any particular mention. It is somewhat curious that the most interesting anecdote we have left us, resulted from the fact that the economic attempt was made to break the animal to useful domestic purposes—an idea that would never have occurred except to a worthy and natural progenitor of the thrifty Yankee.

It seems that one Zebulon Stanhope, a farmer residing near New London, trained a couple of bears to plow and do other labors of the field and road. On one occasion he started "to town" with a sleigh-load of wheat, but some of the harness breaking, the farmer set about repairing the damage, when one of the bears seized him by the leg and sorely wounded it. The bears then simultaneously ran off, leaving the farmer to reach his house alone, which he did with difficulty after four hours' labor. Two or three days were spent in useless search, and bears and sled were given up as lost; when, upon the third day at noon, a noise was heard in the road, and, to the astonishment of the Stanhopes, they beheld the two bears drawing the sled into the barn, and instead of the wheat, four large bears

and three cubs. The door was suddenly closed, and the strangers were shot with a long gun thrust through the crevices of the building.

The country bordering on the Ohio, about the Guyandotte and Big Sandy, at the commencement of the present century was more remarkable than any other locality for all kinds of game, and was really the paradise of bears. At these points were seen, by the early voyagers, the first indications of the approach of a Southern climate. The tall reed displayed itself, gradually growing more dense until it became matted into extensive "brakes" that almost rivaled their congeners of the alluvium of the Mississippi. Some of the streams that here poured their waters into the Ohio, started from amidst the wildest scenery of the Cumberland Mountains, winding among gorges and ravines that fill the spectator with awe, and yet are blessed with the richest of vegetation. It was in these then inaccessible solitudes that Bruin flourished, increased, and grew fat; but after Wayne conquered the Indians of the West, and Kentucky ceased to be struggled for by its original inhabitants, the early pioneers, who retained a taste for adventure, turned their deadly rifles upon the game in the forests, and thus kept alive the excitement, that had become a second nature by

their long experience upon the "bloody path." The demands of commerce also encouraged the pursuit; for Napoleon borrowed from the shaggy covering of the bear the wherewithal to give additional ferocity to the grisly front of war, and the trophies of the skill of the American hunter were in time wrought into the towering caps that waved along the lines of the "Old Guard," and were afterward scattered over the fields of Jena, Austerlitz, and Waterloo.

To the early settlers of Ohio and Kentucky the bear was a source of constant mischief. They existed in great numbers, and very soon learning that the vicinity of the farm-house afforded them their most prized article of animal food, they became notorious for their pig-stealing propensities. If one was "caught in the act," and had to abandon its prey, the carcass was used for a bait to catch the marauder; and as the thief always returned within a given space of time, the indignant farmer, with the aid of his rifle, had his revenge. The bear, in seizing a hog, grasps it in his arms and bears it off, running swiftly on his hind legs. They have been pursued, while thus embarrassed with their load, by men who were swift runners, yet were not overtaken. It was sometimes necessary to make up what was called "drives," to free sections of the country from wild animals. This was done by the citizens living far and near assembling, fully armed, on some given day, and proceeding to the designated rendezvous; a large circle was made by the hunters, including some miles in diameter. Gradually, with great noise, they approached a given centre—of course driving the game before them. In this way, the bear, deer, wild turkey, and "other varmints," were brought within gun-shot; and sometimes, if the drive was successful, the destruction was immense. Generally, the bears that escaped with whole skins got such a "scar" that they decamped the neighborhood, and the settlements were left in peace. In large tracts of country, where a quarter of a century ago these "drives" were essential for the safety of the inhabitants, the deer, the turkey, and the bear are now known only in tradition.

Bears, being most abundant in cold climates, were originally very numerous in the northern nations of Europe, and consequently formed very prominent objects of sport. The people of Poland were remarkably fond of bear-hunting. It was their custom to take in nets those they wished to preserve for "laiting." Once hampered, the hunters rode about him and pinioned the animal to the ground by securing each paw with large wooden forks, and thus kept the animal until he was securely bound with cords, and rolled into a strong chest. Upon a named day, the bear, furious with hunger, was turned loose and slain in the excitement of the chase. The Germans, a century since, were very fond of bear-baiting; and the English indulged in it in more recent times. A play-bill is still preserved in German, which, after giving the details of ten different expected contests—including bull, ti-

ger, and bear-fights—concludes, apparently as a climax, as follows: "And lastly, a furious and hungry bear, which has had no food for eight days, will attack a wild bull and eat him alive on the spot; and if he is unable to complete the task, a wolf will be in readiness to help him."

The Kings of Spain, in their days of dawning chivalry, made the bear-hunt an affair of great state, and pursued the animal with selected hounds and fleet horses; yet they managed the etiquette of killing so critically, that days would sometimes elapse before the hunt could have a true courtly termination. The Swiss were always famous bear-hunters; and when the animal was plenty among the fastnesses of the Alps no sport could have been more manly than their capture from among the ravines and precipices of the snow-capped mountains. We have seen, somewhere, a fine picture representing the successful bear-hunter mounted upon the shoulders of his fellow-citizens, and, as a conquering hero, carried into the town of Berne. In Norway, Denmark, and Finland the bear still roams in primitive independence. In those countries he is hunted and killed by many of the gentry, with a sentiment of sublimity attached to the encounter that gives the incidents a thrilling interest—for the sturdy Northmen, disdainful all advantage, meet the enemy in single combat, and fight and kill with no other weapon than the sword or spear. Those persons, on the contrary, who destroy the bear for profit, have a novel kind of trap, which they bait with honey. A large tree is selected, containing a suitable limb, which limb is trimmed from all kindred branches, and, with great labor, is then bent down to the main trunk and secured in a prepared notch. On this powerful spring is hung, by chains, a wooden shelf, on which is placed a quantity of the coveted product of the bees' labor. The bear soon scents the rich treasure, climbs into the trap, and by his weight loosens the spring; the limb returns back to its natural position, leaving Bruin suspended mid-air, to be disposed of according to the caprices of his captors.

Siberia, however, seems more than any other country to be infested with the bear; and if the stories told of their numbers and their gregarious habits be true, they assume a formidable character nowhere else exhibited. Illustrative of our proposition is the story related of some Siberian peasants, who, while in the forests, got possession of two very young cubs and took them home. Three days elapsed, and the rough strangers had already begun to be familiarized with their hosts, when, on the night of the fourth day, dreadful howlings were heard in the village. The colonists, more curious than alarmed, went out to see what was the matter; but their consternation was extreme when they beheld the cottage which contained the cubs surrounded with bears, standing on their hind legs and howling dreadfully. The villagers ran for firearms and hatchets, and a fierce combat ensued. The beasts rushed on the men, and, although

several were killed by the first discharge, they furiously continued their attack, and could only be routed when the cabin was set on fire; the flames created alarm, and the living bears retired. Eight animals lay lifeless on the ground—five men were killed and thirty wounded.

California has always been remarkable for its ursine population. Its great central valley was called by the Indians, from immemorial times, "the home of the bear." In the Rocky Mountains are to be found the largest specimens of "the grizzlies," and they extend their habitations throughout all mountainous regions that reach to the Pacific. The native population of California, as is the case with all semi-civilized Mexicans, are excellent horsemen, and throw the lasso with the precision of the rifle-ball; these people occasionally, when possessed of unusual courage and industry, attack the forest monarch and make him bite the dust. But it was not until the Americans took possession of the "golden land" that hunting "the grizzly" was made a mere pastime, and pursued for the amusement it might afford.

The California manner of hunting is to pursue the bear, or retreat, according to circumstances, until he comes at bay; and when he rises upon his hind legs, in the attitude of defense, one of the hunters throws a lasso over his neck. The animal turns upon the assailer, when another hunter throws a lasso so as to catch the bear by a hind leg; the horsemen then ride in opposite directions, and the bear is held at mercy. After tormenting the poor brute, and, on the part of the hunters, by their dangerous sport, defying death in a hundred ways, the lasso is wound around a tree, the bear brought close to the trunk, and either killed or kept until somewhat reconciled to imprisonment, and then taken into San Francisco or some neighboring town and kept for the purpose of the brutal exhibition of bull and bear-fighting—a sport harmonious with many of the wild spirits of that modern Ophir, and encouraged by the Mexican population, who have inherited a fondness for such shows from the most cherished remembrances of their "father-land."

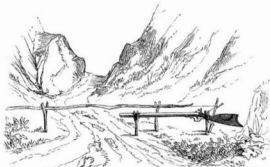
The more the habits of any wild animal are known, the greater is our admiration called forth; for we see traits of character developed and intellectuality exhibited that are ever hidden from the superficial observer. No one can sit down and listen to a hunter without being interested. The trees and stones to him have language, and the living things are sublime in their sagacity and varied powers in providing for themselves. The bear is no exception to the rule; he was made in wisdom, and he constantly, yet silently, declares the glory of the handwork of his Creator.

The female, in providing herself with a retreat, seeks for one on the top of some tall tree, that she may the better be able to defend her young from the attacks of enemies. The male, on the contrary, having no paternal solicitude, makes his bed beneath some gigantic root or

in a protecting cave. The bear is unsocial, and seems to be most contented when buried deepest in the cane-brakes, or among the wrecks of forest-trees blown down by the wind. The power they possess of remaining for months in a semi-torpid state is most remarkable, and peculiar to them over all other warm-blooded animals. Therefore, as might be supposed, they are fond of sleep, shun the daylight, and are seldom known to move about until the sun goes down, unless the faithful dog rouse them in their bed; and even then they will grunt, like the sluggard, for a little more sleep, and a little more slumber, and a little more folding of the paws to rest; and they continue to do this until the fierce and impatient bark gives too fearful indications of proximity.

Bruin does not confine himself to one kind of food; he with judicious care selects not only from the varied products of the vegetable kingdom, but has a fine idea of meats. In the South, he will fatten upon the leaves of young cane, upon the pecan, and sweet acorn. He is industrious every where in his pursuit of fruit, and his vegetable luxuries are parsimonious and green corn. The decayed log has treasures for him as well as for the woodpecker and wild turkey; and for he will tear it in pieces, and daintily pick up the grub-worm and wood-beetle, or any other insect inhabitant that may come in his way. Of meats, he prefers young pig; but "roasters" not always being in season, he contents himself with full-grown porkers. The fondness of the animal for hogs proves one of the greatest evils to the farmer who is just opening a home in the wilderness; and if the bear could only overcome the desire to gratify his swinish propensities, he would much longer escape the avenging rifle. The bear also has a sweet tooth; and if rich and civilized, would expend large sums for confectionery. As it is, he confines himself to robbing the industrious bees; for once let him get track of wild honey, and he seldom deserts the treasure until he has appropriated it to his own use. Reckless, from his protecting hair, of the fury of the enraged insects he is robbing, he will thrust his huge paws into the hollow of the tree and pull them out, reeking in sweets, and then lick them off with a philosophical indifference wonderful to behold. But if one of the victims of his thefts happens to plant a sting effectively in a tender place, he will roll down from his perch and take to his heels, the very impersonation of terror; but learning nothing from experience, will never abandon the treasure until the robbery is complete.

One of the most remarkable peculiarities of the bear is his love of order. In going to and from his retreat to drink, he always pursues the same path, places his feet in the same prints; and, if the season be dry, you can mark the course by a double row of parallel toe-marks in the ground; for the bear, like the pacing horse, moves one side at a time. Again, the animal will enter a piece of woods, cross a stream, or invade a cornfield, always at the same places,



SPRING-GUN.

and continue so to do, until interfered with by the hunter, or driven off to seek more favorable places for food.

This love of order in the bear is taken advantage of by the skillful backwoodsman to kill him with the spring-gun. We never knew but one hunter who was certain to be successful in this kind of sport; and, to use his own language, "he knew *bar* better than he did his dictionary." To set the spring-gun requires a most intimate knowledge of the animal's mental operations as well as of the physiognomy of the face of nature. We have known the size, the sex, and where the animal would be shot, perfectly delineated even before the instrument of death was poised in its place. In preparing the spring, the hunter notices where the bear climbs a fence to enter a cornfield. The path being known, a careful examination is made of the footprints; the exact height of the animal is thus ascertained. Two forked sticks are now prepared and driven into the ground, so that they will hold up the rifle at right angles with the path.

How nice must be the adjustment! The ball must penetrate the heart, else the animal will, though wounded, escape beyond the reach of the hunter. The bear, again, will step over certain things in his way and leap over others; now the trigger must be of that exact height that the bear will do neither, but push it aside with his nose. With all these important demands made upon his sagacity, the hunter, in the proper place, lashes the rifle firmly to the posts we have described. Next he drives down other forked sticks that will hold up a piece of grape vine across the path, exactly as far beyond the rifle as it is from the bear's nose to his heart. This being done, a string is tied to the end of the grapevine, drawn around a delicate stick, and fastened to the trigger; the rifle is then cocked, and the whole is so adjusted that the slightest pressure upon the grape vine that crosses the bear's pathway will explode the deadly weap-

on. It is now sundown, and two or three hours have been consumed in adjusting the preliminaries of "this assassination." At the prescribed hour of night that characterizes the maraudings of Bruin, he pursues his familiar path, when he discovers a slight impediment in his way. Quick to take alarm, he speculates—discovering that nothing more terrible than a grape vine limb that might have fallen from a neighboring tree would intercept his progress, he contemptuously thrusts it aside; the messenger of death penetrates his body behind the fore-shoulder, enters his heart. A few convulsive throes, and this vigorous animal lies lifeless on the ground—the cunning of man being even more than a match for the highest development of the instinct of brutes.

The old be-bears have a habit, in the late spring and early summer months, of biting the bark of certain forest-trees at the highest point they can reach when standing on their hind legs. These "bear signs" are perfectly indicative to the experienced hunter of the size of the bear. By some it has been thought that these indentations are made while the animal was endeavoring to sharpen his teeth; but we suspect that Bruin, in imitation of other romantically-disposed swains, engraves a love-token on the trees, or, possibly, being disposed to rivalry, would leave as a challenge his exact dimensions, for the examination of other ambitious heroes inhabiting the range. We can imagine the consternation of some just fledged "cuffy" strutting forth in all the pride and panoply of a well-greased covering of hair and luxuriantly bear-oiled whiskers, discovering on some smooth beech or contiguous sycamore inciser marks some two feet higher than he can reach. What a comical look must the aspiring bear have as he casts his eyes askance and reads the unexpected challenge for a deadly tussle, or a notice to leave the premises in the shortest time possible under the peculiar circumstances.

We have alluded to the unsociability of the bear; but it should be stated that there are occasionally times when they have their friendly gatherings, and assemble from all the surrounding country to exchange ideas, cultivate short-lived friendships, and have one grand jubilee. The Indians describe these meetings with becoming gravity, and ascribe to them all the intellectual character and importance which they give to their own "talks." The antics of the bear on these occasions are represented as exceedingly amusing; the young cubs are displayed before the visitors with due ceremony, their anxious mothers evidently very proud of their shining coats of black hair and promising strength. They are taken up and dandled with all care, and rocked to and fro, and also, for waywardness, have their ears severely boxed, and are otherwise disciplined into juvenile obedience. On the occasions of the grand dances, an obscure thicket is selected, the grass is beaten down, and protruding roots torn away. The old bears then form a circle, generally sitting upon their haunches, assuming most solemn and critical expressions. The performer meanwhile goes through his pantomime of bowing and prancing, evidently anxious to secure applause; presently a partner volunteers, and an old-fash-

ioned minuet follows. The spectators the while keep time with their paws, and give no mean imitations of "patting Juba;" and warming with the excitement, they will all suddenly spring up and join in a general double-shuffle, the award of superiority being given to the last who, from inclination or positive exhaustion, quits the field. It is from these "backwoods assemblies" that the Indians profess to have learned their most difficult steps and most complicated dances; and to be able to perform like a bear is with them a compliment always desired, but one they seldom have the vanity to believe they truly deserve.

A volume of almost incredible feats might be gathered together, performed, while in captivity, by the poor native of the forest. We have seen them dance in a set with a young lady for a partner, and demean themselves with a decorum that was the envy of many frivolous beaux. There was a gigantic cuffy, belonging to a Spaniard who kept a public house in the vicinity of New Orleans, that contracted so great a habit for whisky and sugar, that he became troublesome unless he had his liquor and his spree, and no one could mistake the cause of his conduct when "fuddled;" for he rolled from side to side, whined like a child, leered



BEARS DANCING.

ridiculously, and smiled foolishly, and was loving and savage by turns. This bear would wrap his huge paw around the tumbler containing "the poison," go through the ceremony of touching glasses "with the gentleman who paid for the treat," and then pour the contents down his capacious throat with a gusto that made old toppers "love that hasimal like one of themselves." Bears have been taught to perform parts of considerable intricacy in theatrical displays; among other things, ring bells, affect to pursue an enemy, fall dead when shot at, beat the drum, and go through the manual exercise of the soldier with the musket.

As the bear has a great deal of "order" and "time" in his intellectual organization, as would naturally seem to be the case, he is very fond of music. His partnership with wandering minstrels, however, can not be looked upon as agreeable to his habits or feelings. The bear, under such circumstances, evidently feels himself a prisoner—torn from his native sovereignty, and led as a captive, to be jeered at and insulted by an irresponsible crowd. Occasionally, amidst this forced degradation, they usurp their rights by a *free squeeze* of their tormentors, or a most unexpected shutting down of the jaws upon a temptingly exposed limb. Of all the triumphs of Wilkie's genius, nothing has exceeded the expression of the bear that is arrested along with the wandering Savoyard, and by the pompos beadle led to prison. Here Bruin perceives man's inhumanity to man; he discovers that, while maltreated himself, he is not the only subject of oppression, but that there are hunters in the forest wastes of human society who pursue even those who hold him in bondage, and confine his masters in prison, and otherwise degrade them. Wilkie's bear perceives all this; the ray of intelligence which flashes through his eye gives currency to the belief that *Æsop's* fables are literal, and that there were times when brutes had their reason explainable on their tongues' end; but being too much given to philosophy and deep reflection—for all beasts in fable history are moralists—they were, for wise purposes, sacrificed, to make more apparent the superiority of the human race.

Bears have always been great favorites as pets, and because they have unexpectedly resented the indignities of their position, they have been termed treacherous. It is evident that their good-nature has brought the greater part of their evils upon them. No one trifles with the lion and tiger; they are left in solitary confinement, and viewed from a safe distance. No one has endeavored to make them play-fellows, or thought of their dancing to the dulcet strains of bad music; but the bear has possibly thought of compromising, of suiting himself to the unfortunate circumstances of his situation, and because he does this, and occasionally, recalling the delights of his forest home, grows restive or even insane, and momentarily asserts his dignity, abuse is heaped

upon him—his character is lost. Better have mercy on the poor brute, and give him no opportunity of being provoked beyond endurance.

Some years since there was a very large, and apparently very harmless bear, kept near the Charity Hospital, New Orleans. Without any assignable cause, it broke its chain and rushed into the street, evidently bent upon destruction. After attempting to break through the windows of a private hospital, in which was lying a patient severely wounded by a pistol-ball, it abandoned its attempt, and rushed into the street, and seizing a little girl that was walking upon the pavement, the bear, at full speed, carried the child screaming along in its mouth, pursued by hundreds of the horror-stricken and enraged inhabitants. The beast was finally killed, and then only were rescued the mangled remains of the child, who had already found immunity from suffering in the merciful embrace of death.

A bear-hunting friend of ours, who has thinned out the "varmints" in the romantic regions of Catahoula, Louisiana, once picked up a young cub that could scarce go alone—it was in such a helpless state of infancy—and carrying it home as one would a young puppy, it was thrown down in the yard, and soon became an object of deep sympathy to the little negroes, who generously divided their corn-bread with their strange little companion. "Billy" thrived under his new regimen, and soon was able to outwrestle and outbox any of his woolly-headed competitors; and these exhibitions became a favorite amusement for visitors, as well as to the juvenile members of the family. Did "Billy" intrude his presence in the kitchen, he was rapped over the head with some heavy household utensil, and beat a hasty retreat; did he dare to profane the rich carpeted floors or parlors by his enormous feet, he was rudely assailed, and patiently bore the unceremonious notice to "keep his place."

Spring time of the year came, and "Billy," cub as he was, much to the annoyance of the mistress of the household, discovered in the garden the just developing cabbage leaves and pea-vines, and resolutely appropriated them to his personal use. While thus marauding, the negro gardener, a stout man, picked up the limb of a rose-bush that had just been trimmed from its parent stem, and, playfully hitting Billy over the ears, bade him leave to him the proscribed precincts of the garden. The young bear, that was not half grown, and had never before shown the least anger, suddenly became filled with rage, seized the offender by the leg, and, rising upon his hind-quarters, shook the heavy man about as if he had been a bundle of straw, then dropping him, as if conscious of having done wrong, he whiningly crawled toward the house, when a rifle, in the hands of the planter, put an end to his existence. The negro man lingered a short time, but suddenly the crushed bones and mutilated muscles gangrened



under the influence of a hot climate, and death ensued.

The planters of the South, more than the citizens of any other section of the Union, indulge in the manly excitements of the chase; they are, without exception, excellent horsemen, and have a thorough knowledge of woodcraft. At the proper seasons of the year "hunts" are made up, sometimes the result of the accidental appearance of game in the vicinity, but frequently by arrangement, which last several days. By the peculiar formation of Louisiana, in the neighborhood of the most settled communities are tracts of country in primitive wildness; and with little trouble the ambitious sportsman can leave the allurements and artificialities of enlightened life and plunge into the forests, where every thing is sacred to the silence of Nature and wild repose. To accomplish their wishes more perfectly, some enthusiastic sportsmen provide themselves with jolly little steamers, made for no other purpose than for the transportation of horses, dogs, guns, provisions, and men, into out-of-the-way places, where a camp is formed, and days, and sometimes weeks, are dedicated to following the amusements incidental to such life.

Some years ago the acorn, or "mast" crop, had been more than usually abundant in the lands known as the "Old Reserve," and it was understood that game was abundant, beyond what was known of any former years. Old Captain Wild, a genuine hunter, whose chief glory was to get a number of good fellows about him on a hunt, having his craft, *Fairy Queen*, overhauled, her machinery put in order, and provided with "innumerable stores," issued his commands to the surrounding country that an expedition was "affoot," and that all good and true men so disposed must be at "his landing" at the stated time, armed and equipped according to custom and their several humors. It is needless to say that the call was obeyed with alacrity, and on the "happy morning," a number of "good fellows" proceeded on board the *Fairy Queen*, whose clamorous joyousness exhibited itself but little less rudely than did the accompanying hounds, which, excited to the last degree, sounded forth their sonorous notes of joy in anticipation of their future work.

"Put down them guns carefully," "Don't forget the claret baskets," "Keep the powder dry," "Shove a little wood into the steam idlers," "Tie up them infernal dogs," "Found a little tow around the piston-rod," "See that them canvased hams are not left ashore," "Be careful of them 'ere demijohns," with a hundred similar orders, were issued in rapid succession by Captain Wild and every body else, as the hunting-boat got under weigh, and, striking out into the rapid current of the Mississippi, moved down stream with astonishing celerity. To say that the boat got along smoothly would not be true, for there were so many captains on board, that even the brainless engine finally got confused with the contrariety of orders, and but for the

stern decrees of Captain Wild, might have pursued its way to the surging waters of the Gulf of Mexico and there found a grave; the boat, however, recovered its self-possession, shot into the mouth of a narrow creek, and was soon adding very much to the picturesque aspect of one of those inland lakes that forms so peculiar a feature of the lands bordering on the Gulf.

The coughing, wheezing noise of the coffee-mill engine, as we dashed along, echoed through the Gothic isles of the gigantic cypress; the alligators began to appear in the distance, and, occasionally, one would float along on his easy couch, until a rifle-ball would strike him in his eye, and set him struggling for a moment in sight ere he sank lifeless to the depths below. On we went, each moment getting farther into "the swamp;" the pendant moss grew more and more dense, until it seemed to hang a gray pall over the trees, to serve as hiding-places for the repulsive bittern and the mysterious family of cranes.

After threading for almost a day these singular solitudes, our veteran pilot brought his boat against some high ground, that peered out of the surrounding level like an island in the sea, and announced that we had at last reached our place of destination. The geologist has yet to explain the causes of these singular formations. Where all the country is alluvial, and the surface of the earth rises only to the height of the annual deposit of the flood, there will occasionally spring up these elevated places, as if provided, in times of universal inundation, as resting-places for the foot of man and beast. They are evidently forced upward by some convulsion in the bosom of the earth, and suggest to the imagination that some monster, hidden away in the unknown below, has turned in his bed and left a fold in his great coverlid to mark his uneasy rest. Upon these "dry places" the melancholy cypress gives way to the oak, the beech, and the magnolia; and charming little birds, noiseless and voiceless, flit from limb to limb; Nature, in her economy, only providing the melody of woodland choristers after the habitations of man are built, and the sovereign intelligence of the creation is present, to hear and appreciate them.

In the course of an hour the camp was fairly established. By the aid of sharp hatchets, limbs of "saplings" were soon shaped into poles for the support of a tent, the trunk of a fallen tree served as the back of an extempore fire-place, and the ascending blaze gave a cheerful home-feeling at once to "the settlement." The hounds that had been confined all day to the boat, now gambled about, and made the welkin ring with their cries of delight, among which would occasionally be heard the sharp snapping yelp that indicated to the hunters the presence of game.

While these preparations were going on, one of the party loaded his piece, and starting on a "still hunt," he coasted along the edge of the island, and was soon lost in deep shadows; and before the arrangements for the night were

entirely completed, he returned with the saddle of a young deer bestride his shoulders, which was received with due demonstrations of pleasure, and after being suspended from a neighboring limb, was left to furnish the substantial portion of the evening meal; an appetite for which had been so much sharpened by the healthful labors and excitements of the day.

The party of the *Fairy Queen*, by arrangement, were in the morning to meet old Dan Griffin, a hunter by profession, who had lived in the woods until he possessed, from long habit, many of the ways of the Indian. When he came into the neighborhood no one could tell; he was discovered in the vicinity in early times, buried up in the solitudes, and looking as odd and singular as a fossil remain. He was exceedingly popular with all who knew him; yet it was difficult to command his company, and it was only when he made exceptions to his general habits that he would consent, as a hunter, to mingle in the crowd while pursuing game. Dan's great horror was a double-barrel fowling-piece. He never could overcome his dislike to these, to him, disagreeable weapons; and it was probably more to avoid them than society that he so persistently refused to join in the sports of the amateur hunters, who occasionally visited his neighborhood in the solitudes of the "Old Reserve."

To see Dan, of whom I had heard so much, was the chief inducement of my being in the woods at all; and as soon as I could satisfy myself of the proper direction, I set off for his camp, which was, from the peculiarity of the country, easily found. After working my way through the cane, and threading, as best I could, many terrible lagoons, I finally came to a spot of earth somewhat free from undergrowth, and very soon to old Dan's cabin, a place where he spent a portion of almost every year. The old hunter, engaged in the never-ending task of clearing his rifle, was sitting at the door of the rude hovel, which consisted of a few stakes driven into the ground, and covered with palmetto leaves. At his feet reposed two or three veteran dogs, which would have assuaulted us on sight, but for the peremptory order they received "to keep quiet, and not mistake a human for a catamount." A few words of explanation only were necessary to establish friendly relations, and accepting the hospitality of the old woodman, I set myself down with as much confidence in the sincerity of my welcome as if the place were my own.

"So your friends have come up to have a hunt," said Dan, after listening to the details of our arrival in his neighborhood, "and they want to see me kill a bar, do they?"

"If it is possible," said I, in reply.

"It is possible," pursued Dan, "for thar ar varmint in the range, and it is agin natur' that animal reason should circumvent human knowledge."

"But I might hunt a year in this very place, and never see a bear all that while."

"It's not unlikely," said Dan, chuckling, "for you see every one has his fashion. What could I do in a settlement but git lost? yet you can find your way about easy; it's what you learn by practice that does it. I know what's going on in the woods, you know the devilments of a city. I am getting odd, though, and bones might not be so annoying. The time was when I felt as if I was forty feet high, without a limb hurt or windshake, was as tough as a cat, and unsiring at my work as a sawyer; but this was before the country was ruined by clearings, blazing trees, and running off the game."

As the old man made this last remark, he put the finishing touches upon "Confessor," as he called his well-worn weapon, and holding it out before him, and gazing upon it for a moment with affectionate interest, he said, "Thar's a rifle as never deceived me, nor done a mean action; it always puts the ball where it is intended, and was never drawn upon any thing except in a fair fight."

"You, like all old hunters, I see, prefer the rifle to the fowling-piece."

"I pretend I do," said Dan, his face filled with disgust. "Who wants a gun as full of shot as a gizzard is of gravel? What does bar care for a peppering that only cuts his skin and don't touch his vitals?"

"And do the bear die so hard," I asked, to call out my honest companion.

"Sartin they do; it's the natur' of wild beasts to live, and a bar in that way is very particular. A ball, sixty to the pound, he generally takes as kindly as a mosquito bite; and at a fair shooting distance, any thing smaller is beneath thar notice. Stick a gun agin a bar's sides and the wad 'il hurt him; but at eighty yards, or maybe a hundred, to stop a bar short in his tracks takes a chunk of lead, and sich aim, too, as would, at twenty paces, lark a dog-wood limb, and not shake down a blossom."

"Such delicate aim," I observed, "will ever be beyond my skill, so the bears will go free for any thing that I can do to stop them."

"Not so sartin of that," said Dan, in a consoling voice. "In old times, when I lived among the mountains, I could ha stuck you in a gorge, and run an 'old he' plump over you, and maybe I can do it at 'a stand' in a cane-break; and of your double bar' has any varmint, you can reach the varmint's vitals, though bars, like the Indians, have their notions about dying—one likes to go off by a rifle-ball, and the other with old age."

Noticing the contempt with which Dan looked upon the popular weapon of gentlemen-sportsmen, I suggested that they ought not to be used in the same expedition with "Confessor."

"My rifle can stand such company," returned Dan, with a sentimental expression of which I had thought his face incapable. "Yes, it can stand it. I've heard a red skin brag of killing a sleeping foe, and I lived through that, and 'Confessor' must be as generous to double bar's as I was to the ways of the Indians."

"But," said I, with some pride, remembering the fine shot on the wing. "You needn't use a rifle on a bird, or a snipe, for instance," and I pointed to one fluttering about the margin of a stream near by.

"No, I would not," said Dan, emphatically, "for I never made feathers fly, nor with powder and lead broke a bone that *kind's* marrow is in. Why, my rifle would blot such a bird perfectly out of existence. I never shot at any thing that isn't game."

"And are not birds game?" I asked, with some surprise.

"Perhaps they are," said Dan, half soliloquizing, "perhaps they are, and may do for settlements; for human nature is naturally a hunter, and it must come out. Birds and double bar'ls for the towns is the best that can be had, and ar better than nothing. I knew a good bar dog turn rat-catcher by being shut up in a clearing."

Perceiving that Dan's prejudices were unconquerable regarding the use of fowling-pieces, I humored the conversation, and inquired "What he meant by the remark that human nature was a hunter?"

"Just this," said Dan, with emphasis: "eating and drinking in the woods depend on it, and the trees cum *afore* houses; human nature, therefore, started a hunter, and the wild blood will show itself. War is huntin' as much as shootin' bar or trapping beaver. What's a general with his men but a had hunter and worse dogs, and agin nature, spilling human blood; but to slay varmints, provided the rifle is fairly drawn, is lawful, because animal strength and quickness ain't equal to it. I'm agin all advantages, and for fair play—no firing from behind trees, nor using rests."

"I must take to the rifle, Dan," said I, raising his heavy weapon with difficulty to my eye; "a little practice might give me some certainty of aim."

"With your young bones, in time you might feel as certain as lightning;" and then, apparently growing interested himself, he related the following reminiscence:

"After the British got through fitin' us in 'the war of '15,' a young red-coat made good friends with the 'Mericans, and staid out on the frontiers, to do what he called 'sportin'.' He had a double-bar'l in his hand from morning to night, and well did he manage it for so unwarthly a weapon. He was always in the woods and along the water-courses, or floating on the lakes. He had more huntin' contraptions than soldier ones. A fishing-net to put his birds in; a canteen for his powder; a snake-looking thing to hold his shot; coat all pockets; and leggins made to imitate our Indians, though not half so good. Educated right, and I believe he would have been something of a hunter. The first time I saw him shoot he knocked down two wild pigeons on the wing, and as the poor things lay fluttering, he asked me if it wasn't well done? 'As well as robbing their nests of

eggs,' said I; at which he rared up and talked about my insulting him. Says I, 'Stranger, that's no use of getting your hair turned the wrong way 'cause a man calls things by the names he thinks they deserve; and if killing birds ain't as bad as robbing their nests, then putting a man under water won't drown him.' 'And what do you shoot?' finally said he, getting agreeable. 'Why, varmints,' said I, 'and with a rifle.' The Britisher tuck the weapon in his hand, judged of its weight, looked down the muzzle, aimed it as well as he could, and asked me to show him its virtue. 'Twasn't long afore I had him after game as weighed something when you killed it; so he left off his double-bar'l, his fish net, and did wonders. I couldn't break him of duck-shooting, but I educated him to pick out his bird, and not fire into a flock and take the chances. He said he loved the woods, and I think he was sorry he was a lord, or something of that sort, which kept him from turnin' Indian."

Dan having concluded with great abruptness, he proposed to go over to the camp of amateur hunters, suggesting that his fare was too rude for my acceptance. As he followed his remark with mounting his bullet-pouch and powder-horn, with other indications of departure, I at once assented, and in a few moments more we were threading the dark forest, which, under Dan's guidance, seemed to possess a tolerably good road.

We arrived at the camp just as its occupants were busily engaged in discussing their evening meal. The venison was steaming up from the living coals with most grateful incense. The arrival of Dan was cordially greeted, and after having accorded him the seat of honor, all resumed the agreeable task of satisfying appetites, made doubly keen by healthful exercise in the bracing open air. The scene presented was picturesque in the highest degree. The hunters reclined at ease in every possible attitude; some so disposed of as to be brought into full blaze of the light, while others sank into deep shadow, and formed most admirable contrasts. On the outside of the circle were the attentive hounds, erect upon their hind quarters, and eying with most petitioning expression every mouthful of food consumed by their masters. Occasionally these faithful servants of the chase would be rewarded with a bone, which would cause a momentary scrambling and growling, and then they would recover their knowing, observing looks. Meanwhile the conversation among the bipeds assumed, of course, a professional turn, and was illustrative of the accidents and incidents of the hunter's life.

Captain Wild, always remarkably attentive to his guests, but for the moment absorbed in tucking away innumerable pieces of broiled venison under his capacious vest, having "loaded up," he chimed in as follows: "Your character of the bear is all very well; he is not only the knowinest animal in the woods, but he has a nice sense of honor, and will forgive an in-



THE CAMP FIRE.

jury rather than take revenge on the wrong person. Oh, you may doubt the truth of what I say, but it is a fact nevertheless! You all know Moses and Aaron Giggin, twin brothers, who look so much alike that their father never knew them apart except when they were together. One day they were out among the dewberry hills hunting bear, when Aaron chased an 'old he' up what he thought was a *runse*, but it turned out to be 'a wash,' and instead of opening into the low lands, just closed up with a chunk of a precipice sixty feet high. The bear couldn't climb up the steep bank, so he made a 'back track,' and the 'twin' had to take to his heels to get out of the way. Down 'the wash' the two ran, making excellent time, but the bear had the heels, and was about to give his enemy a bang, when the unfortunate victim hollowed out, 'Oh, Moses, if you have any love for your brother, *jest in*, and divide this fight!' Moses heard the call, and, in coming to the rescue, literally rolled down the sides of the

embankment; at the same instant the bear came up with every hair on end, and his ears crowded down close to his head. First, he made a feint at Aaron, then a pass at Moses; but getting confused, by not knowing them apart, he concluded he would not take the responsibility of *jumping on the wrong man*, and so he let 'em both off; and that," said the Captain, draining off his tumbler of claret and assuming a knowing look, "is what I call proper self-respect, and an evidence of gentlemanly consideration worthy of all praise; and now," concluded the speaker, "let Jim Wicker tell us how his head got so bald."

Jim Wicker was a comical-looking fellow, with a very young face, but by reason of having no hair, he looked very old from his eye-brows all the way round to the back of his neck. He was very sensitive about the defect, and was somewhat celebrated, from a fight he had with a traveling agriculturist, who, upon being asked by Jim, "What would cause his hair to grow

on his shining poll, was advised to cover over the top of his head with guano, and plant it down in crab grass." But Jim wouldn't quarrel with Captain Wild, for that gentleman was not only the host of the *Fairy Queen*, but also had the key of all "the refreshments" in his possession; so without hesitation he enlightened his auditory after this fashion:

"You see the bar always did keep rather scarce 'bout my scalp, and I was always raving in one thing and another to fetch it out, for I was sartin the roots wasn't dead, though thar was little to be seen above the ground. I'd heard of bar's-grease, and bought a gallon in bottles; but I believe it was nothing but hog-slard and mutton tallow; so I thought I would have the genuine article, and I got old Dan to go out and kill something for my especial benefit. Dan told me it was in the spring, and that the bar was in bad health and out of season; but I believed he was trying to quiz me, and wouldn't take no for an answer. A short hunt fetched a critter at bay, and Dan, by a shot in the vitals, 'saved the varmint'; but the bar was in a bad condition, for he looked as seedy as an old Canada thistle, and he had hardly life enough in him to keep his joints from squeaking, but what he did have I got, and used; and strangers," said Jim, looking sorrowfully round on the company, "in two days, what little bar I had commenced falling off, and in a week I was as bald as a gun-barrel. Dan was right; the varmint was a shedding himself, and had nothing in him but bar *sheddy* life, and the consequence is, I can't in the dark tell my head from a dried gourd, if I depend on feelin'."

"Bar meat," said old Dan at the conclusion of Wicker's story, "is best, in course, in the fall; in the spring the varmint is just out of his nap, and the first thing he does is to get clear of his old coat, so he eats yabs as makes the bar all fall off, so that in the fall he comes out as black as a coal, and as shiny as glazed powder. Catch a bar, then, when he has had a cornfield to hide in, and his spar ribs taste like rostin' ears. Nothin' a bar loves more than green corn, except young pig. I have seen the varmint break off the ears, strip off the husk, and eat the corn as handy as I could do. A bar will sometimes gather up a pile of ears, and carry them to an eating-place, and chew 'em up at his leisure. If he is a little bar, he will break down the stalks to gather them; if he is a tall bar, he tears the ears off without so much trouble. The fact is, bars are knowing animals, and if they could talk would give us many ideas of the wood we don't dream of—" And in his abrupt way, he concluded: "I've seen a bar climbing over a Virginny fence with an armful of rostin' ears, and never tripping a step."

This last remark called forth Uncle Tim, who never allowed any one to "see" more than he did or could, and cordially assenting to all that he heard, with an equivocal expression that would throw a doubt over truth itself, he related an incident that came under his per-

sonal observation, and was looked at with his own eyes. "I think," said he, "was two years ago, just after the crop was laid by, that I was out a 'still huntin'; when I got down on 'little Caney,' just back of Bill Shaddiek's pre-emption, that I heerd a terrible scrimmage, and I crept up, and looked over a fallen tree, and what should I see but—two 'old he's a-fightin' over a pumpkin and sum rostin' ears? They stood up and came the scientific boxin' rigler, occasionally tucking each other aside of the head, and giving black eyes and bloody noses; then they clenched and had it rough and tumble, worse nor any 'fection fight I ever seed down at Myers's. I tuck sides ov course, and gyrated round a-praying that the little fellow would whip. Thar the two had it, round and round, and over and under, when the big fellow went to gubbing, and I cried out, 'Turn him over, little un', and get his foot in your mouth.' 'No, you don't,' the fellow sang out."

"Who sang out, Uncle Tim?" inquired Captain Wild, some of the boys at the same time whistling.

"The bar sung out," said Uncle Tim, not the least confused, at the same time assuming a "ferocious look." "The bar," you see, "didn't say the words, but just cocked his ear, when the little un' did get the walloper's fist between his grinders; and sich a fuss! the dirt flew about from the extra licks, and I believe they would ha' disappeared in hole of their own diggin', if I hain't put in my say so, and just tuck the big fellow in the gizzard with old 'Barkaway,' that had a good bullet inside, and four buck-shot chambered as snug as peas in a pod. The bars in the excitement didn't hear the gun, nor *swell* see, the old un' thought he'd got a severe dig in his breadbasket from his antagonist, and four the harder, but the little un' felt him give up, and got a new hold, and struck the old fellow amazin', then very deliberately tuck up the rost-



BEAR GETTING OVER THE FENCE.

in' ears in his left arm, and putting the pumpkin on his head, he walked off, clomb over a high fence, and disappeared in the swamp."

"And that is a fact, is it?" asked several listeners, without concealing their incredulity.

"Sartin," said Uncle Tim, helping himself to the contents of a stone jug near by, "sartin it's a fact; I've got the big bar skin at home, under my bed now, and I showed Zack Taylor the very next morning the place whar the bar got over the fence; in coorse it's a fact. *I said it.*"

This last remark called forth such a loud laugh from Uncle Tim's hearers, that old Dan had to interfere by remarking that such noises would scare away all the game in the vicinity, and the hint from such exalted authority immediately restored things to a cheerful silence.

As the night advanced, one by one the members of the party announced their intention to sleep, by wrapping their blankets around them. As the hours wore on, the fire was replenished, showing there was always an eye open in the camp. The occasional cry of an owl only broke the silence, save when they, with almost noiseless wing, flitted near the flame, and roused the dogs by the momentary intrusion. With the earliest dawn the hunters were up, and examining their weapons, soon started for the dense cane-brakes in the vicinity. Old Dan, who had been so quiet the night previous, now roused himself, and by common consent took charge of the hunt. In the course of a few moments his superiority was cordially acknowledged, and his orders were implicitly obeyed.

There being no horses in the crowd, it was impossible for any one to take an active part in "the drive," and Old Dan pronounced it unnecessary, as there were signs enough on the trees and ground to satisfy his experienced eye that game was plenty. After crossing one or two lagoons, the hunters came to a "window," and among the matted limbs of trees and cane the dogs halted, and every one became excited at the prospect of rousing the bear.

No one can watch the intelligent companion of man without interest, and more particularly when warmed by the chase into the development of all his powers. The pack was composed of old and young—some full of experience, others all impudence and impetuosity. Those just past puppyhood, and out for their first season, scampered up and down the hollows and breaks, yelping at every shrub and stump, indiscriminately "opening" upon the scent of a rabbit, cat, or any other inferior animal that might have passed along the previous night. The older ones went about their work with all the decorum of serious business—impatient, yet, while uncertain, expressing themselves with subdued growls. A practiced eye might select the master-spirit—some grave old fellow, with a wrinkled neck and scarred skin, evidences of many a hard fight. Often, indeed, would you hear the suppressed and sharp bark from the subordinates; but all were unheeded

until "Leader" would announce the trail found. The hunters, all expectation, watched with constantly-increasing anxiety these preliminaries; and at the same time, in spite of Old Dan's cautions, would urge the dogs on, by calling their names, and addressing them as if they were intelligent beings. An old dog, named Wolf, in whose mongrel form could be traced the mixed breed of the common deer-hound and coarse mastiff, curiously blending in his face the long nose, so powerful in scent, and the low, broad forehead and underhung jaw of the mere brute, forming the real bear dog, was evidently the favorite with Dan and the crowd generally.

"Wolf isn't as fast as Leader to get into a fight," said Uncle Tim; "but once it's coming off, he does his business beautiful." At this instant a sleek hound, named Spring, a lithe creature, that was nosing daintily the fallen leaves, opened with full cry, and started off, all the young dogs at his heels. Leader and Wolf, however, disregarded the signal, and Old Dan kicked back some of the dogs, exclaiming: "Wait, you young varmin'ts, until your betters give the signal! If you should suddenly come on a warm bear trail, it would take your har off!" Suddenly and simultaneously Leader and Wolf opened, and, side by side, disappeared in the dark "break."

Old Dan watched the demonstration for a moment, and throwing "Confessor" across his shoulder, was about to follow, but before he had time to take more than a step or two, Wolf came back, snuffing the air; then lowering his head for a moment, he gave forth a prolonged cry, and with a heavy lope, took an entirely different route from the rest of the dogs.

The manoeuvre was a singular one; the hunters saw that something was wrong, but Old Dan was in ecstasies; he fairly sprang into the air, as he gave a whoop of encouragement to Wolf, who, he said, had "the trail" and "the lead." The pack, already confused, and hearing the voice of Dan, now came plunging past, as they retraced their steps. The hunters, with eyes flashing, followed on; the cane cracked and bent beneath their tread, while the sounds of the trusty dogs grew fainter and fainter in the distance, and gradually fell upon the ear like the cadences of a mellow horn saluting the now uprising sun.

Dan, perfectly understanding the country and the habits of the animal pursued, stated where the dogs would probably come upon his den, and struck off into an Indian lope, followed by the crowd of hunters as best they could. In a short time they were all brought to a halt by a swift-running stream, in the centre of which was a thickly-wooded island. The dogs had already reached it, and could be seen running up and down in wild confusion, but gradually they narrowed their circle, and Dan pronounced the bear roused, but still in his bed. It was a moment of intense interest, for if the animal had once come to bay, there was no telling the fate of some of the dogs before their masters could

reach them; but all were relieved by the sight of a bear rushing out from the matted vines and fallen trees, and jumping into the water, for he had already scented the hunters, and took an opposite direction, the dogs in full cry at his heels.

By the peculiarity of the ground the animal only circled round, and consequently, in spite of all his exertions, was never far from his pursuers. After giving indications that satisfied the hunters that he had frequently come at bay, he finally, as if in despair, ran up the trunk of an immense tree, and disappeared within.

The dogs yelled and scratched at the foot of the retreat until perfectly exhausted, and when the hunters came up they lay around the opening they had partially made among the roots, panting and blowing, yet ready at any moment to "pitch in." The possibility of the bear "treeing" had not been provided for, and there was not in the crowd an ax, and the one in the *Fairy Queen* was too dull and light to be of much

practical benefit. A consultation of war was held, and it was agreed to build a fire, and smoke the enemy out of his hiding-place. To carry out this plan more perfectly, one of the hunters made a reconnaissance of the upper limbs of the tree, and satisfied himself of the possibility of dropping flaming pieces of wood down the trunk. The moment there were brands sufficiently ignited to answer the purpose, a grape vine was used for a rope, to draw them into the tree, and when precipitated, they could be heard rattling downward. In the mean while, the opening below was enlarged until it reached "the hollow," and the bear, to the joy of all, was heard to growl.

The dogs now alternately took turns in trying to get at *Brsin*, and succeeded in getting their bodies half out of sight. Wolf, ever the readiest in the contest, was first to reach the bear, which he seized by the jaw. A terrible struggle ensued. The opening was fortunately too small to enable the bear to use his claws, and, exert-



SHOOTING AT THE BEAR FROM THE TREE.



FIGHT OF DOGS AND BEAR.

ing all his strength, he tore himself loose, breaking off Wolf's "holding tooth" by the force. The hunters here endeavored to interfere, but Wolf dashed in again, when the bear, waiting for the attack, wiped his paw across the brave dog's skull, broke it in as if it were paper, and dragging the body to him, lay down upon it, and by his immense weight pressed out the last lingering breath.

This catastrophe was perfectly understood by all present; tears fairly started in Uncle Tim's eyes, as he cried out, "I'll give my saddle horse for a sharp ax to get this infernal tree down!" One or two pointed their guns into the hole, with the intention of firing inside at random, but Old Dan interfered: "It's no use," said he, with characteristic coolness; "it's no use wasting your shot and your meat at the same time; smoke the varmint out on some terms, and let's have his carcass in sight;" and with this advice, he commenced for the first time earnestly the work of expulsion. Gathering up the fire scattered about, and ordering dried leaves to be brought, Old Dan concentrated them at the root of the tree, and fanning them into a flame with his hat, very soon gratified his assistants with the evidence of smoke lazily curling out of what might be termed the huge forest chimney.

At last the dried rotten wood of the interior shot into a blaze, and the bear came rushing out at the top, his jaws covered with foam, his eyes blinded with the smoke, and his once glossy coat singed and ruined; nothing could exceed his appearance of terror and impotent anger.

As he hesitated upon one of the bravest limbs, in order to arrange his confused ideas, preparatory to a desperate leap, Old Dan (by common consent not interfered with) raised his rifle and fired. The bear sprang upward, struck

upon the branches, rolled over, made a fruitless grasp with his claws, and fell into a crotch just beneath, and, to the surprise of all, could be discovered among the openings in the intervening foliage quietly disposed, in a crouching attitude, his head close to the bark, where he seemed to calmly survey his enemies, who were barking and shouting below.

"Now," said Dan, as if disgusted with his want of success, "blaze away with your double barrels." Before the old man could finish making the suggestion, several shots were fired, and were continued as rapidly as the parties could load, but the bear was still immovable.

"Why dont you fetch him down?" said Dan, wiping out the interior of his pipe with some tow. "Give it to him in his face and hams; they ain't mortal parts, but he can't stan' peppering all day."

Bang—bang—bang went the fowling-pieces. Captain Wild, who had been perfectly furious ever since the death of his favorite, now stepped out, determined to give the finishing shot, when he turned suddenly to Old Dan, and said, "Why that bear hasn't got as much life as a tree knot."

"In course," said Dan; "didn't Confessor knock it out of him; but no matter, you've got plenty of powder, so make a sieve of the hide." A general laugh ensued, in which the old hunter joined, for he had, according to his notions, disgraced the weapon he so much disliked, and vindicated the superior precision and power of his favorite rifle, and his triumph was complete.

It was the work of but a few moments for one of the party to climb the tree and dispose of the bear's body from its resting-place, which being accomplished, it came lumbering to the earth with a force that made every thing tremble. The dogs, which had been awaiting the re-



sult, now sprang upon the bear, and tore it for a moment to their heart's content; but soon finding that there was no resistance, skulked away from it with evident mortification.

A shovel and an ax by this time had arrived from the *Fairy Queen*, and by the judicious use of both the body of poor Wolf was reached, and being hauled upon the green turf, was decently disposed of, preparatory to an honorable burial. Uncle Tim insisted upon digging the grave, and after the body of the once faithful animal was hidden away in its last resting-place, he leaned over his spade, and addressing the dogs, which were induced to gather round him, supposing he was hunting for game, Uncle Tim said:

"Wolf was born nobody knows whar, and was, as a puppy, glad to live in the quarters. He never had a far chance as a pup, but he fout himself into notice as soon as he got big. His mother was a true hound, and you could a' made a silk purse of *her* ears, if you can't of a sow's; but Wolf's tuck too much after his daddy, and the bull in him made him over-fond of a fight. 'Twas no use his sticking his head into the bar's mouth; he had no chance. I've known Wolf, gentlemen"—and Uncle Tim addressed his human auditors with almost as much feeling as he did the dogs—"I've known Wolf, gentlemen, to whip off a hull pack from a dead bar, and sit by it alone until the hunters came up. Ef there is any truth in Indian stories, Wolf will have a good master and plenty of game in the happy hunting grounds."

"Thar is truth in them," said Old Dan, with reverence—and the last tribute paid to a once faithful companion of man was at an end.