

## BRUIN'S MANY WOES.

THE POOR OLD FELLOW HAS A HARD TIME OF IT.

The Siberian Peasants Trap Him in Pits and With Nooses—Ingenious Devices Based on an Accurate Knowledge of Bear's General Character.

The bear in Russia is what the bull is in Spain—the common enemy. Everybody looks upon it as the most praiseworthy of actions to take a bear's life whenever and wherever possible. Yet in spite of this constant war upon his kind, bruin manages to live and to have a gay time.

The Russian bear is the common brown bear found in large numbers in the Pyrenees, and in Russia and in Siberia especially, very numerous. This unwieldy and very crafty animal is omnivorous, which makes him a disagreeable neighbor for farmers and for anyone possessing garden and stable yard. When he is young the bear lives on acorns, chestnuts, walnuts, fresh fruits, roots, mushrooms, grain, eggs, worms, and even insects. His bill of fare is very varied, and he is always hungry. As he gets older he develops a taste for fresh meat, preferably that of human beings. If he can't get a man he will take a fat pig, but his decided preference is for man. Therefore, man is naturally and eternally at war with him.

The chase of the bear has always been considered sport for sovereigns in Russia. Until a young prince has slain his first bear he can not be considered to have shown his courage under arms.

In Siberia the peasants and small farmers are perpetually looking out for bears, and are never happier than when chasing one or trapping him. In this latter sport they are especially ingenious. Bear hunting is very profitable. To free the neighborhood of bears means freedom for the flocks, and less damage to the growing crops. Besides, bear's meat is considered as great a delicacy in Siberia as in our Western States.

The manner in which bears are trapped in Siberia is amusing because it shows such accurate and profound knowledge of the nature and habits of Mr. Bruin.

The dominant principle in the bear's character is excessive suspicion. As he is possessed of senses of almost miraculous sharpness, it is decidedly difficult to get around him. If it were not for his besetting sin, his darling weakness, gluttony, the Siberian peasants would never get him into their clutches at all.

Beehives are often robbed by bears, even when they are but a few yards from a peasant's cottage. The raspberry thickets, which cover whole acres in Siberia, are always favorite haunts of the bears at the season when the fruits are ripe. As may well be imagined, the bears do not pick the berries one by one. They sit down on their haunches, and clutching a great mass of bushes with their huge, hairy forepaws, they bite off great masses of fruits and leaves and briars all at once, at the same time keeping up a noise something like the purring of a monster cat, and expressive of their extreme satisfaction.

In these thickets the peasants dig deep pits, and garnish the bottoms of them with very sharp wooden spikes, the blunt ends of which are driven firmly into the ground. The pits are then artfully covered with broken boughs and leaves, so as to simulate the appearance of forest soil. As soon as a bear falls into one of these pits and is wounded on the sharp stakes, he roars and growls so that he can be heard for miles, and the peasants put an end to him with guns and spears.

But of all the Siberian traps for bears, none is more ingenious or displays a more delicate and far seeing sense of combination than the "lasso and the block." A long cord, very strong and several yards long, is attached at one end to a huge log of wood, and at its other extremity a running noose is rigged and artfully concealed in the center of a mass of brushed leaves. This noose is so arranged that bruin, in order to get at a peculiarly tempting mess of raspberries, which his gluttonish eyes see not far away, must put his head through it. The noose falls loosely about his neck, and does not trouble him until he begins to move away, when the weight of the log of wood tightens the rope, and bruin finds that he can not breathe. After two or three angry trials to pull ahead, like a dog attached by a rope, when walking by his master, the bear growls and follows back the rope until he comes to the log. He picks it up and bites it, shakes it, fights it, throws it down, and starts off again; but anew the fatal cord tugs at his windpipe and his eyes are starting from their sockets. Twice or three times he goes back to fight the log of wood. Then finding that this does not help him, he takes up the log and carries it off in his arms or in his forepaws. Then he looks about for a high precipice or a lofty rock from which to throw the offending log. The moment he finds one he pitches the log violently over, and is, of course, pulled over after it and killed by the fall or so choked that he is easily captured.

Another ingenious trick which rarely fails is the bringing of a very heavy block of wood, suspended by a cord from a bough directly in front of a beehive in the hollow trunk of a tree. When the bear comes to rob the hive he pushes away the block from the door of the hive and is surprised to find that it comes back and strikes him in the neck. This awakens his rage. Anxious to get the honey he gives the block a terrible push, and of course it returns with all the more violence, and sometimes breaks his skull or knocks out his teeth. It is said that bears sometimes fight with these swinging blocks for half an hour at a time. At last the block gets in a good blow, the bear is thrown to the ground, where he is speedily dispatched by the peasants concealed and awaiting the result of the singular tree duel.

Another and more cruel trap is composed of a broad plank filled with sharp iron spikes. This is slightly concealed with grass and dirt. Bruin steps on it and finds his forefoot caught; he presses with his hind feet to get away—they are caught also; and, nailed to the plank, he is a lost bear.

## HE WAS A LITTLE TOO LATE.

A Tale of Conjugal Infidelity in the Pennsylvania Backwoods.

I was riding along one of the mountain roads of northern Pennsylvania recently, and had got up into the hills about four miles from the railroad station at Geetown, when I met a wild looking man on horseback, with a bundle in front of him. He was evidently a denizen of the lumber woods. He pulled up his horse when he met me, and exclaimed in anxious tones:

"Say, boss! Y' didn't meet a feller drivin' a mule to a buckboard wagon anywhere on yer way up, did y'?"

"Yes, I did," I replied, for I had.

"Were he gettin' along at a to'fable stiff gait?" asked the anxious woodsman.

"Yes, he was, come to think of it," I replied.

"Seem ez if he were goin' to git thar, did he?" said the lumberman.

"Get where?" I asked.

"To Geetown."

"There's no doubt about it," I said.

"Were tha a woman with him, did y' notice?" asked the man.

"Yes, there was," I replied.

"Cross-eyed?" questioned the woodsman.

"I don't know about that."

"Mole on her nose?"

"That's more than I can say."

"Were the mule lame in the off hind leg?"

"I think he was."

"Didn't notice whether the woman were cross-eyed, hey?"

"No."

"Did the man have a yaller baird?"

"Yes; a long, yellow beard."

"From w'at little y' see o' the woman, d'ye think tha were room enough on her nose for a good sized mole?"

"Well, yes, I think there was."

"Did the mule wheeze considerable as he spun by y'?"

"He acted to me as if he might have a touch of the heaves; yes."

"Couldn't swear the woman wa'n't cross-eyed, could y'?"

"No."

"Buckboard kind o' rattly in the spokes, an' actin' ez if a pint or two o' grease wouldn't hurt it?"

"It seemed that way."

"Woman hev on a blue dress 'n' a green hat with a red feather in it?"

"I remember the green hat with a red feather."

"Were tha a gap in the buckboard's dash, sumpin' like ez if a mule's heels mowt 'n' gone through it some time or other?"

"Yes, there was a hole in the dash."

"But y' hain't dead sartin' th' tha were a mole on the woman's nose?"

"No."

"Tha hain't no doubt, though, but w'at they were goin' to git thar?"

"Not a particle."

"Man in his shirt sleeves an' one gallsus?"

"Yes. I remember that he was in his shirt sleeves and wore but one suspender."

The anxious woodsman paused as if trying to think of something else to ask, but at last said:

"Y'll hef to 'scuse me stranger fer bein' so kinder curious, but mebbe y' nown't know who them folks be?"

"I haven't the least idea."

"Well, the mule 'n' the woman 'n' the buckboard is mine. The man is Sim Bilger. He's slopin' with the woman, 'n' it's jist my darn luck to be too late to ketch 'em, fer they've took the keers at Geetown afore this!"

"What! The woman your wife?"

"Course!"

"Well," said I, "it don't seem to me that I would go to much trouble to fetch such a woman back."

"Fetch her back! Great hoop pole! I hain't arter her to fetch her back!"

"What were you in such hot pursuit of her for, then?"

"Well, it's this here way. Time she sloped with Bill Balls, a year ago last spring, she kim back two or three weeks arterwards 'n' said she'd forgot some of her duds, 'n' she'd kim back to git 'em. I tol' her whar she'd find 'em, but she jist settled down to hum ag'in, 'n' were bossin' the clearin' same ez afore in less'n half an hour. She run things for a spell, 'n' then sloped with Sam Fletcher, the mule boss. 'Twa'n't long fore she diskyered th' she'd forgot to take sumpin' else o' her'n, 'n' she kim back to git it, 'n' first thing I know'd I were workin' fer her ag'in. Las' fall she cut sticks 'n' dug out with Joe Fassett."

"Gosh! I says, 'I hope Samantha's men'yry hain't ben bad this time!' I says, 'If she's forgot anythin' this trip I nown't as well move out. But sure as sap she'd ben fergitful agi, 'n' 'twa'n't three weeks fore she kim prancin' back hum arter sumpin' she'd left ahind her, 'n' me 'n' her went to workin' in harness ag'in. Now along comes Sim Bilger, 'n' Samantha puts on her bes' 'bib 'n' tucker 'n' slopes with him, 'n' I'm too darn late to ketch 'em!"

"Let 'em go!" I said. "What do you want to waste your time chasing up such cattle for?"

"Let 'em go!" exclaimed the anxious husband. "Course I'll let 'em go! But there's a lot o' things in this here bundle th' Samantha's forgot! W'at I wanted w'te to overhaul her 'n' give 'em to her so she wouldn't hef to come back arter 'em! Now she'll member 'em in a week or two, 'n' consarn it! she'll come home a hummin'! It's jist my darn luck!"

And the disappointed husband turned his horse about and galloped disconsolately away.—Ed Mott, in New York Sun.

**Who She Would Support.**

A hard working woman was asked: "Madam, are you a woman suffragist?"

"No, sir," was the answer; "I haven't time to be."

"Haven't time? Well, if you had the privilege of voting, whom would you support?"

"The same man I have supported for the last 30 years."

"And who is that?" "My husband."—Nebraska State Journal.

McAuber—I claim that more people drink than do not. Heep—And I say less drink. McAuber—Thanks; I don't care if I do.—Binghamton Leader.

## HUMOR IN OFFICIAL PAPERS.

General Grant's Pun and Mr. Lincoln's Dispatches to His Generals.

It has been semi-officially recorded somewhere that General Grant is the only President who ever dared to perpetrate a pun in a state paper, and that he did it in one of his messages when he said: "Agriculture is the groundwork of our national prosperity." President Lincoln's joking propensities are historic, and if he has left no message with a pun in it the Government files at least afford numerous illustrations of his inclination to give play to his humor.

In preparing for the printer the manuscript of the rebellion records the officials of the War Department frequently run across letters and telegrams written in Mr. Lincoln's characteristic style, and abounding in wit, all the more surprising when the circumstances under which the correspondence were carried on are remembered. In June, 1863, General Dan T. Tyler telegraphed President Lincoln from Martinsburg that he and his command were besieged. The President immediately wrote this message in reply:

"If you are besieged how do you dispatch me? Why did you not leave before being besieged?"

The following month General Thomas telegraphed: "The Union forces are now passing Carlisle" (Pa). To this message Mr. Lincoln replied: "Lee is now passing the Potomac faster than the forces you mention are passing Carlisle."

\* \* \* Forces now beyond Carlisle \* \* \* will in my unprofessional opinion be quite as likely to capture the man in the moon as any part of Lee's army."

A prominent general on another occasion telegraphed Mr. Lincoln that the head of —'s army (Confederate) is at —burg and the tail is on the plank road near —town. To this the President replied: "You say the head of —'s army is at —burg and the tail at —town. If this be true the animal must be there somewhere. Can't you break his back?"

When the President and every member of the administration were apprehensive that Early would succeed in marching into Washington, Mr. Lincoln sat down by the side of his telegraph operator and in a telegram to the commanding general of the Union forces explained by the Rule of Three how it was possible to keep the Confederates from reaching the capital.—New York Sun.

**Street Driving in Paris.**

The noise of the streets in Paris would cause an American to fancy himself at home on the Fourth of July. The average Parisian is no more to be trusted with a whip than he is with a locomotive whistle. From dawn till dusk the cracking of cabmen's whips makes the air tremulous with resonant agitation. Every man who drives a horse carries a long whiplash, and cracks it incessantly. Crack, spat, spatter, spatter, crack, crack, go the whips in a never ending chorus around you wherever you walk, and apparently in your apartment when you try to sleep. If you want to imagine what it sounds like, just fancy every third or fifth man in New York going about firing giant torpedoes all day and night. These terrible inflictions, the drivers, are quite picturesque. They wear red waistcoats as a rule, and invariably sport tall hats of some shiny material that looks like patent leather. Their hat bands are often of metal silvered or gilded. They are a pestiferous lot, as noisy with their mouths as with their whiplashes, and though I had no quarrel with any I heard of or saw quarrels between them and their fares on all sides. They have no silly scruples against a battle of tongues with a woman, and the American ladies in Paris were often quite terrorized by these noisy malcontents.

There are few, if any, hansom men in Paris, the small open barouches being the favored public conveyance. To see a myriad of these flitting about at night is like looking at a festival of lanterns. In places Paris is brilliantly lighted by masses of lights, always gaslights; but in the open places, like parts of the Champs Elysees, where the foliage flings dense shadows, the lamps of the cabs produce a beautiful effect. 'Buses are plenty, but lest the driver should fail to make the necessary amount of noise with his whip and voice he is reinforced by the use of a horn fixed beneath his foot-board, and worked by a sort of bellows process. An expert driver is therefore able to make three sorts of noises at once. In Paris the public vehicles are too few and too slow. Paris is as far behind London in means of public conveyance as London is behind New York.—Harper's Weekly.

**The Bohemian.**

We often read of some person who "leads a Bohemian life." What does it mean? Quite a history is suggested by the word Bohemian. The first gypsies who reached Paris 500 years ago or so came from Bohemia. They wandered around without settled residences, and in time any man or woman who seemed to have no regular way of living was called a Bohemian. A Bohemian nowadays is a person who doesn't do things the way everyone else does them. For instance, the man who eats many 50 cent table d'hote dinners is considered a Bohemian; a woman who smokes a cigarette is dreadfully Bohemian; all newspaper men are Bohemians, because they never get to bed until daylight, and take breakfast in the afternoon. And, furthermore, no Bohemian calls himself so, any more than a newspaper man calls himself a journalist.—New York Sun.

Voltaire said of an apothecary that his employment was to pour drugs, of which he knew little, into a body, of which he knew less.

"First impressions are not always correct," said the printer as he yanked a section of type out of the galley he proved.

It takes an unusually good swimmer nowadays to float a loan.—Boston Herald.

The spider is the original business center.—Scranton Truth.



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