

Theories That Have Been Advanced, Good and Bad Scenting Days-How Hounds Lose and Recover the Trail. Fallen Leaves as a Help to the Hunted Fox.

If there is one thing more than another than has vexed the minds of sportsmen through countless centuries, it is the question of "scent" --that remarkable commodity which is so necessary to the success of the hunter. And yet even in this twentieth century, says the London Daily Mail, with all the accumulated knowledge of successive generations at our disposal, it is doubtful whether we know much more about the mysteries of scent than did Nimrod, who, so far as we know, was the mightiest hunter of early days

As to Nimrod and his methods of hunting we are actually told but little for he is only referred to twice in all the writings of ancient days that are given to us, and no mention is made of his hounds. But we have records of one Marri-who is held by many old time writers to be one and the same as the mighty hunter of Genesis -and he certainly hunted with hounds the latter being invariably mentioned with his name.

At that very remote period, therefore, the usefulness of the hound as a tracker of wild beasts had been recognized and doubtless everything was done then, as it is to this day, to encourage the natural instinct of the canine race in this particular with a view to aiding man in the chase. Yet after all these days there is not an M. F. H. in the land, or a huntsman either, who can tell you why it is that under precisely similar meteorological conditions hounds can run on a burning scent all day on the Monday, and can scarcely raise a whimper on the ruesday, though the fox be but half a field ahead of thef.

Many theories have been advanced to explain the vagaries of scent, but none of them is entirely satisfactory. Some no doubt still pin their faith to the words of the poet who declared Thist.

A southerly wind and a cloudy sky, Frot aim a hunting morning.

But as a matter of fact neither the one nor the other will make scent "hang" if so be that Providence wills it otherwise. You cannot indeed lay down any hard and fast rule concerning so variable and intangible a thing as scent, which is generally at its best when you least expect it.

Country folk will frequently tell you that scent is never good during the fall of the leaf in autumn or, indeed until the fallen leaves have become rotten. The reason given in support of this argument is that the

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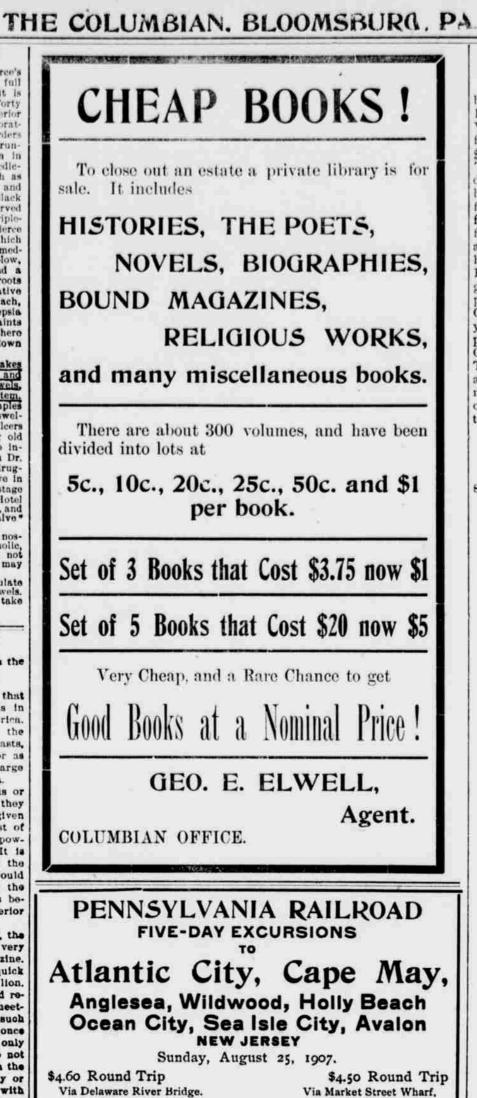
BIG BEARS OF ALASKA.

Largest Flesh Eating Animals in the

World Not Excepting Lions. Very few persons really know that the largest flesh eating animals in the world are found in America. People generally believe that the African lion is the king of beasts, but he is not nearly as large or as powerful an animal as the large brown bear of subartic America.

The bears are not as feroclous or combative as the lions, nor are they nearly as vicious as they are given credit for being; but the largest of them are much larger and more powerful than any of the lions. It is safe to say that the largest of the brown bears of the North would weigh three times as much as the largest specimen of lion, and is beyond all question greatly superior in strength.

If brought together in combat, the bear would at first appear very clumsy, says Scribner's Magazine. It would not be capable of the quick rush or the catlike spring of the lion. It would not attack, but would remain entirely on the defensive, meeting its adversary with blows of such rapidity and terrific force as at once to illustrate its superiority not only in strength but in action. I do not believe that there is an animal in the world that can act more quickly or effectively or can aim its blows with greater certainty than the bear. The large brown bears of the



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fox while running turns over the leaves as he goes along-accidentally of course!-and so conceals his tracks as it were, behind him. It must be a careful fox that could

accomplish this slight of foot with any degree of accuracy and a poor nosed pack of hounds that come not own his scent through the shallow density of a withered leaf. But the yokel is quite right up to a certain point in his argument. Scent very often is at its worst during the leaf fall but tha. is because the smell of decaying leaves themselves is so pugent that it baffles the noses of the pack unless the fox carry a very pronounced odor of his own. Perhaps it is because, like the countryman, we sometimes forget side issues of this description that we are often puzzled by the mysteries of scent.

One point in particular in regard to scent seems impossible of solution. A fox slips away on one side of a covert while hounds are drawing on the other. Somebody sees him and shouts a view hallo! Along comes the hunts-. man at his best speed and lays on his hounds at the spot where the aforesaid person swears that the fox left the wood, but not a hound in the pack will own the line; never a whimper breaks in upon the expectant silence of the eager field. Cast after cast is made but to no purpose, and eventually the huntsman moves off to resume his draw, futtering to himself that he "don't believe there weren't no fox at all."

For all that, twenty minutes later, when hounds happen again to be passing that way toward the next covert, suddenly there is a whimper here and another there, and away they go like a pack possessed right across the field and through the very gap in yonder bedge that had been pointed out to the unbelleving huntsman. "Well, I never!" remarks that worthy, "and so old Mr. Stiggins was right after all.'

Scent certainly at times hangs well in a high wind, just as cortainly as on a very still day it will unaccountably disappear all of a sudden. But there are days when the wind is high and the ground wet, at which times here must be plenty of evaporation roing on, but never a vestige of scent is to be discovered, although half a cen foxes may leave covert before your very eyes.

People who have no sense can't dd the best they can.

Alaska peninsula, south of Bering Sea, are among the largest bears of the world, and it is evident that there is no part of the world outside of America in which such large flesh eating animals are found. The beasts are fiesh eaters, or carnivorous yet there are none of them that depend upon flesh for food, and with most of them flesh comprises but a very small percentage of their food.

Heroine of a Siege.

Among the rank and file of the Russian prisoners of war from Port Arthur the name of Haritina Korotkevitch is reverenced as the heroine



of the siege. Twenty-seven years of age, she accompanied her husban 1, a private in the Thirteenth Rifle Regiment, to Port Arthur and got permission to don a private's uniform and to fight with the others. Vith such gallantry and conspicuous brayery did she take her part that she received the complete set (four) of the St. George's Cross. Toward the end of the slege she was with her husband in the first fighting line defending one of the forts when a Japanese shell literally blew her to pieces. Her husband was badly wounded in the same engagement and is now in the Red Cross Hospital at Matsuyama. The grief among the soldiers when the news went around that "Private" Haritina was dead was Bloomsburg, Pa., Aug. 14th, 1907.

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