



HUNTING THE MOUNTAIN SHEEP

BY
THEODORE ROOSEVELT

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BIG-HORN, more commonly known as mountain sheep, are extremely wary and cautious animals, and are plentiful in but few places. This is rather surprising, for they seem to be fairly prolific (although not as much so as deer and antelope), and comparatively few are killed by the hunters.

In size the big-horn comes next to buffalo and elk, averaging larger than the black-tail deer, while an old ram will sometimes be almost as heavy as a small cow elk. In his movements he is not light and graceful like the prong-horn and other antelopes, his marvelous agility seeming rather to proceed from sturdy strength and wonderful command over iron sinews and muscles. The huge horns are carried proudly erect by the massive neck, every motion of the body is made with perfect poise; and there seems to be no ground so difficult that the big-horn cannot cross it. There is probably no animal in the world his superior in climbing; and his only equals are the other species of mountain sheep and the ibexes. No matter how sheer the cliff, if there are ever so tiny cracks or breaks in the surface, the big-horn will bound up or down it with wonderful ease and seeming absence of effort. The perpendicular bounds it can make are truly startling—in strong contrast with its distant relative the prong-horn which can leap almost any level jump, but seems unable to clear the highest height. In descending a sheer wall of rock the big-horn holds all four feet together and goes down in long jumps, bounding off the surface almost like a rubber ball every time he strikes it. The way that one will vanish over the roughest and most broken ground is a perpetual surprise to any one that has hunted them; and the ewes are quite as skilful as the rams, while even the very young lambs seem almost as well able to climb, and certainly follow wherever their elders lead.

To him the barren wastes of the Bad Lands offer a most attractive home; yet to other living creatures they are at all times as grimly desolate and forbidding as any spot on earth can be; at all seasons they seem hostile to every form of life.

Occasionally the big-horn come down into the valleys or along the grassy slopes to feed, but this is not often, and in such cases every member of the band is always keeping the sharpest look-out, and at the slightest alarm they beat a retreat to their broken fastnesses. At night-time or in the early morning they come down to drink at the small pools or springs, but move off the instant they have satisfied their thirst. As a rule, they spend their time among the rocks and rough ground, and it is in these places that they must be hunted. In color they harmonize curiously with the grayish or yellowish brown of the ground on which they are found, and it is often very difficult to make them out when lying motionless on a ledge of rock.



Up the slippery ice-covered buttes we clambered.

Time and again they will be mistaken for boulders, and, on the other hand, I have more than once stalked up to masses of sandstone that I have mistaken for sheep.

When lying down the big-horn can thus scan everything below it; and both while feeding and resting it invariably keeps the sharpest possible look-out for all danger from beneath, and this trait makes it needful for the hunter to always keep on the highest ground and try to come on it from above.

As far as lay in us, on our first day's hunt we paid proper heed to all the rules of hunting-craft; but without suc-

cess. Up the slippery, ice-covered buttes we clambered, clinging to the rocks, and slowly working our way across the faces of the cliffs, or cautiously creeping along the narrow ledges, peering over every crest long and carefully, and from the peaks scanning the ground all about with the field-glasses. But we saw no sheep, and but little sign of them.

Finally we struck the head of a long, winding valley with a smooth bottom, and after cantering down it four or five miles, came to the river, just after the cold, pale-red sun had sunk behind the line of hills ahead of us. Our horses were sharp shod, and crossed the ice without difficulty; and in a grove of leafless cotton-woods, on the opposite side, we found the hut for which we had been making, the cowboy already inside with the fire started. Throughout the night the temperature sank lower and lower, and it was impossible to keep the crazy old hut anywhere near freezing-point; the wind whistled through the chinks and crannies of the logs, and, after a short and by no means elaborate supper, we were glad to cover down with our great fur coats still on, under the pile of buffalo robes and bear skins. My sleeping-bag came in very handy, and kept me as warm as possible, in spite of the bitter frost.

We were up and had taken breakfast next morning by the time the first streak of dawn had dimmed the brilliancy of the stars, and immediately afterwards strode off on foot, as we had been hampered by the horses on the day before. This day, though the weather had grown even colder, we did not feel it, for we walked all the while with a quick pace, and the climbing was very hard work. The shoulders and ledges of the cliffs had become round and slippery with the ice, and it was no easy task to move up and along them, clutching the gun in one hand, and grasping each little projection with the other.

When on the way back to camp, where the buttes rose highest and steepest, we came upon fresh tracks, but as it was then late in the afternoon, did not try to follow them that day. When near the hut I killed a sharp-tail for supper, making rather a neat shot, the bird being eighty yards off. The night was even colder than the preceding one, and all signs told us that we would soon have a change for the worse in the weather, which made me doubly anxious to get a sheep before the storm struck us. We determined that next morning we would take the horses and make a quick push for the chain of high buttes where we had seen the fresh tracks, and hunt them through with thorough care.

We started in the cold gray of the morning and pricked rapidly off over the frozen plain, columns of white steam rising from the nostrils of the galloping horses. When we reached the foot of the hills where we intended to hunt, and had tethered the horses, the sun had already risen, but it was evident that the clear weather of a fortnight past was over. The air was thick and hazy, and away off in the north-west a towering mass of grayish white clouds looked like a weather-breeder; every thing boded a storm at no distant date. The country over which we now hunted was wilder and more mountainous than any we had yet struck. High, sharp peaks and ridges broke off abruptly into narrow gorges and deep ravines; they were bare of all but the scantiest vegetation, save on some of the sheltered sides where grew groves of dark pines, now laden down with feathery snow. The climbing was as hard as ever. At first we went straight up the side of the tallest peak, and then along the knife-like ridge which joined it with the next. The ice made the footing very slippery as we stepped along the ledges or crawled round the jutting shoulders, and we had to look carefully for our footholds; while in the cold, thin air every quick burst we made up a steep hill caused us to pant for breath. We had gone but a little way before we saw fresh signs of the animals we were after, but it was some time before we came upon the quarry itself.

We left the high ground and descending into a narrow chasm walked along its bottom, which was but a couple of feet wide, while the sides rose up from it at an acute angle. After following this for a few hundred yards, we turned a sharp corner, and shortly afterward our eyes were caught by some grains of fresh earth lying on the snow in front of our feet. On the sides, some feet above our heads, were marks in the snow which a moment's glance showed us had been made by a couple of mountain sheep that had come down one side of the gorge and had leaped across to the other, their sharp toes going through the thin snow and displacing the earth that had fallen to the bottom. The tracks had evidently been made just before we rounded the corner, and as we had been advancing noiselessly on the snow with the wind in our favor, we knew that the animals could have no suspicion of our presence. They had gone up the cliff on our right, but as that on our left was much lower, and running for some distance parallel

to the other, we concluded that by running along its top we would be most certain to get a good shot. Clambering instantly up the steep side, digging my hands and feet into the loose snow and grasping at every little rock or frozen projection, I reached the top; and then ran forward along the ridge a few paces, crouching behind the masses of queerly-shaped sandstone and saw, about ninety yards off across the ravine, a couple of mountain rams. The one with the largest horns was broadside toward me, his sturdy, massive form outlined clearly against the sky, as he stood on the crest of the ridge. I dropped on my knee, raising the rifle as I did so; for a second he did not quite make me out, turning his head half round to look. I held the sight fairly on the point just behind his shoulder and pulled the trigger.

At the report he staggered and pitched forward, but recovered himself and crossed over the ridge out of sight. We jumped and slid down into the ravine again, and clambered up the opposite side as fast as our lungs and slippery ice would let us; then taking the trail of the wounded ram we trotted along. We had not far to go; for



We found him lying on his side.

As I expected, we found him lying on his side a couple of hundred yards beyond the ridge, his eyes already glazed in death. The bullet had gone in behind the shoulder and ranged clean through his body crosswise, going a little forward; no animal less tough than a mountain ram could have gone any distance at all with such a wound. He had most obligingly run round to a part of the hill where we could bring up one of the horses without very much difficulty. Accordingly I brought up old Manitou, who can carry any thing and has no fear, and the big-horn was soon strapped across his back. It was a fine ram, with perfectly-shaped but not very large horns.

The other ram, two years old, with small horns, had bounded over the ridge before I could get a shot at him; we followed his trail for half a mile, but as he showed no signs of halting and we were anxious to get home we then gave up the pursuit.

It was still early in the day, and we made up our minds to push back for the home ranch, as we did not wish to be caught out in a long storm. The lowering sky was already overcast by a mass of leaden-gray clouds; and it was evident that we had no time to lose. In a little over an hour we were back at the log camp, where the ram was shifted from Manitou's back to the buckboard. A very few minutes sufficed to pack up our bedding and provisions, and we started home. Merrifield and I rode on ahead, not sparing the horses; but before we got home the storm had burst, and a furious blizzard blew in our teeth as we galloped along the last mile of the river bottom, before coming to the home ranch house; and as we warmed our stiffened limbs before the log fire, I congratulated myself upon the successful outcome of what I knew would be the last hunting trip I should take during that season.

The death of this ram was accomplished without calling for any very good shooting on our part. He was standing still, less than a hundred yards off, when the shot was fired; and we came across him so close merely by accident. Still, we fairly deserved our luck, for we had hunted with the most patient and painstaking care from dawn till nightfall for the better part of three days, spending most of the time in climbing at a smart rate of speed up sheer cliffs and over rough and slippery ground. Still-hunting the big-horn is always a toilsome and laborious task, and the very bitter weather during which we had been out had not lessened the difficulty of the work, though in the cold it was much less exhausting than it would have been to have hunted across the same ground in summer. No other kind of hunting does as much to bring out the good qualities, both moral and physical, of the sportsman who follows it. If a man keeps at it, it is bound to make him both hardy and resolute; to strengthen his muscles and fill out his lungs.

Mountain mutton is in the fall the most delicious eating furnished by any game animal. Nothing else compares with it for juiciness, tenderness, and flavor; but at all other times of the year it is tough, stringy, and worthless.

AN ISLAND OF QUIET.

Yet Going Downtown in Madeira is an Exciting Event.

Madira is populated, yet is one of the quietest as well as one of the most beautiful places in the world. Although the roads are paved with round beach stones, there is nothing to remind one of the fact, because, as David G. Fairchild, agricultural explorer of the department of agriculture, explains in the National Geographic Magazine, there are no horses or jolting wheels.

All vehicles in Madira are on runners. If you go calling it is in a bullock sledge with canopy top and comfortable seats. If you move a bank safe or a steam boiler it is carried on a "stone boat," or sledge of poles, and you may have to get forty oxen to pull it. If you are in a villa on the hillside and want to get downtown you take a running car and slide down over the cobblestones.

Two strong men, each holding a guide rope, pull your car over a bag of grease to grease the runners and then give you a running shove and jump each on a runner behind as the car shoots down at a breakneck pace over the cobblestones.

The men yell, hens and dogs scamper, foot passengers cling close to the wall of the narrow street, the runners get hot and fill the air with odor of burning wood as you shoot round sharp corners, down the busy thoroughfare, past gorgeous masses of flowering creepers which hang over the walls of the private villas that border your road.

But, oh, the change when you get to the bottom! You are obliged either to walk or take a carro, drawn by slow moving bullocks, squeaking and slipping over the stones.

Handicapped.

Judge—Remember, witness, you are sworn to tell the truth, and nothing but the truth. Witness—Judge, I am trying my darndest to do it, but that pie faced slob of a lawyer there won't let me!—Chicago Tribune.

CLUBMEN BLAZE WAY TO VICTORY

Pennsylvania League Lines Up
For the Campaign.

ARE READY FOR "BATTLE"

Republicans Inaugurate An Aggressive
Canvass to Insure the Election of
Taft and Sherman and to Keep the
Keystone State at the Head of the
Party Column in November.

[Special Correspondence.]

Wilkes-Barre, Sept. 22.

Pennsylvania's Republican campaign was formally opened last week at the convention of the League of Republican clubs, and there is every assurance that the Keystone state will give a splendid account of herself at the election on Nov. 3 next.

The clubmen were particularly fortunate in having so many men of national prominence as their guests and to speak at their mass meeting.

Vice Presidential Nominee James S. Sherman was very happy in his references to the stalwartism of Pennsylvania Republicans, and he declared that their fellow Republicans of the Empire state would vie with them at the coming election in rolling up a big majority for the entire Republican ticket.

Congressman Nicholas Longworth, Senator Boies Penrose and John Hays Hammond were among others who addressed the great assemblage in the armory.

This meeting, the splendid attendance at the convention and the demonstration made by the mine workers and others in the parade which was given prior to the opening of the meeting, left no room to doubt the enthusiasm for Taft and Sherman among the Republicans of this state.

Aside from the cordial endorsement of the nominees and the platform of the Republican national convention, the club league placed upon record strong testimonials to United States Senators Penrose and Knox, and later on there was an exhibition of earnest and sincere approval of a suggestion from Colonel John R. Wiggins that the members of the league should go to work at once to insure the election of Republican members of the legislature who will in January next be called upon to elect a successor to Senator Penrose. Colonel Wiggins was applauded when he advocated the reelection of Senator Penrose.

Following the re-election of Robert B. Habgood, of McKean county, to the presidency of the league and the election of other officers, a platform was adopted, which among other things says:

A Patriotic Party.

"The Pennsylvania State League of Republican clubs in its twenty-second annual convention assembled, declares its unwavering faith in the policies of the Republican party under which the state of Pennsylvania, in common with its sister states, has grown and prospered. In the more than fifty years of its existence the Republican party in state and nation has ever been loyal to the patriotic institutions of the country, while it has advanced the

material interests of all the people by wise and progressive legislation.

"In every great movement for the development of industry or the improvement of commerce, it has taken the lead and maintained the ascendancy. It has been opposed and obstructed by the Democratic party and its achievements have always been in spite of the assaults and obstructive tactics of the Democratic party. Only once in the past fifty years have the people voted for a change from Republican to Democratic rule. They were misled by the arguments of the supporters of Grover Cleveland into believing that tariff revision which would lead to ultimate free trade would be better for the common people than the Republican system of protection to American industry.

A Painful Experience.

"The experience was a wretched and painful one, as the records of the second Cleveland administration clearly demonstrate. From the Cleveland administration to the present time Republican presidents and Republican policies have been sustained. Under Republicanism thus restored to power, the country has experienced its greatest progress. It has seen the free silver heresy come and go. It has observed the cry of anti-imperialism and of government ownership of railroads. These theories were advanced as the entering wedge for the overthrow of Republican success, but they have been met and countered in each succeeding national election. We are now approaching an election where new theories are to be met.

Democratic Experiments.

"One of those is the proposition to impose upon the government of the United States the business of an insurance company for the protection of deposits in national banks to the prejudice of the larger depositors of the farmers and thrifty industrialists of the country who have placed their faith in state banks and savings funds. We are opposed to the introduction of this theory as an experiment in our national life, believing that it is not a government function to protect the money of the schemer and speculator, while the savings of the honest toiler are to be prejudiced and endangered.

"With this new theory advanced as another expedient by the candidate of the Democratic party, this convention has no other concern than to point out its fallacy and the danger that would follow its attempted introduction. We stamp this "new thought" of the versatile dreamer of Democracy as an insidious and dangerous bit of demagoguery, no more entitled to the respect of the people than was his proposition to sell fifty cents worth of silver bullion to the government of the United States for a good gold dollar.

Warning to Republicans.

"We warn Republicans upon the farm; in the factory; in the mine; and in business circles generally, against the experiments that are being proposed by our Democratic opponents; each and every one of them is simply intended to confuse the political situation and to undermine the foundations upon which the prosperity of the country has been reared, in order to discredit the Republican party and to place the Democrats in power. We believe as firmly today in the protective tariff of the Republican party as we ever did.

"We believe the time has come when the tariff law may be revised by its friends in order to regulate such inequalities as may have arisen or to correct such abuses as may have crept in, but we do not waive our devotion to the protective principle, nor do we yield in the slightest measure our demand that American industry shall be a safeguard against unfair foreign competition.

"We believe the tariff should be so adjusted, so maintained, that every imported article that comes into competition with domestic manufacture, shall be made to pay duty representing the difference in cost between the wages paid abroad and the wages paid at home, with a reasonable profit to the manufacturer. Our industries have grown and prospered under this system, and we claim for the Republican party the credit of having made it what it is.

The Two Senators.

"Our distinguished senators, the Hon. Boies Penrose and the Hon. Philander C. Knox, are to be congratulated upon the records they have made at Washington. The long service of Senator Penrose upon the important committee of postoffices and postroads, during which time he has seen the growth of the postal business of the country from eighty millions per annum to two hundred and twenty millions per annum, and during which he has contributed largely in the developing of the free rural delivery service of the country, is especially noteworthy.

"What shall we say of our junior senator? When the proposition to prosecute the illegal trusts of the country was brought before Mr. Cleveland's attorney general, Richard Olney, it was reasoned that the laws were too feeble to reach the powerful malefactor. Under Theodore Roosevelt, how different the situation! Mr. Knox, the attorney general and now the junior senator from Pennsylvania, declared the law sufficient to hold the rich malefactor equally with the poor and, still better, he demonstrated the truth of his opinion by bringing the illegal combinations to the bar of justice and overthrowing them. And this brings us to the final declaration of this convention.

"The league convention was one of the most successful that has been held in recent years, and a telegram received from Colonel Wesley R. Andrews, chairman of the Republican state committee, warmly commending the work of the members of the Republican clubs in recent campaigns.

SECOND TO NONE

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\$1.00 Grey Fleeced Blankets - 75c
\$1.50 Grey Fleeced Blankets - \$1.00
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