BEAR, MOOSE, AND DEER.

HUNTING BEARS WITH DOGS.

A Desperate Attack on a Grizzly—One Thrust With a Bowie Knife.

FORT CUSTER, Dec. 10.—In the fall of '83, a party of three Englishmen came out to the Big Horn country on a hunting trip. Sagebrush Bill and I were engaged to take them up into the mountains and show them bear. We gleaned our way leisurely along the Little Big Horn valley, knocking over considerable game as we went; and on the fifth day out from Custer we pitched our camp in a nice little mountain park between the cañons of the Little Big Horn and the Rosebud.

We were now in one of the finest regions for big game that exists any where in the Rockies. Both Sagebrush and I knew the Big Horn Mountains from one end of the chain to the other, having, at one time or other, hunted bear and trapped beaver on pretty much every stream that debouches from the range.

It was the latter part of October, just the time when the bears were thickest among the foothills. For the last month a good many of them had been off on berrying expeditions along the prairie streams. The plums and black haws on the prairie creeks ripen in September, and the bears had been down and cleaned them out. In the higher altitude of the foothills the berries are a week or two later, and these the bears harvest in October.

Sagebrush and I had shown the Englishmen right smart sport coming up, and had promised them all the bear hunting they wanted. We knew just what we were talking about, too, for the ball opened with a grizzly the very first night after our arrival in camp.

One of the Englishmen had brought along a pair of dogs, with which they reckoned upon having a good deal of sport. He had been an army officer in India, and the dogs had been reared there, and were thoroughly trained to hunting bear. They were strongly built dogs, especially about the jaw, being a cross between the bulldog and some powerful mongrel breed of India. The largest dog was a brindle, with its ears chawed off and scars all over its body; the other was a white dog covered with little reddish spots. The brindle was called Goorkah, and the other Monocular, on account of having lost one eye in a fight with a wolf.

They looked like a pair of good dogs, savage and strong, yet remarkably intelligent. Still, when the Anglo-Indian used to talk about them doing such wonderful things with bears, Sagebrush and I allowed betwixt ourselves that the bears in India were not like the mountain bears. Be this as it may, however, we were soon to be astonished by the dogs.

The very first night in camp, just after we had turned in, the dogs both bristled up, and with fierce growls stood and glared eagerly at some object which we could not discern in the deep shadows of the pine timber at the near edge of the park. They were tied up with pieces of cord to the wagon wheels. Suddenly they seemed to forget their tethers, and sprang forward with savage eagerness. Goorkah's rope was too strong for him. But Monocular broke loose, and with swift bounds cleared the park and disappeared in the timber. Goorkah struggled and ripped around at a fearful rate, until he almost choked himself to death, but couldn't get loose.

The master was bunking in the wagon, and whistled and called for Monocular to come back, but all in vain. The moon shone pretty brightly, and wherever the pine woods were not too thick it was not dark. Seeing that Monocular could not be called back, and fearing he might have tackled a bear alone and got badly mauled, Sagebrush and I and the Englishman in the wagon decided to follow him up. Turning out, we unloosed Goorkah, seized our Winchesters, and followed.

We could hear nothing of the other dog, but Goorkah bounded forward, and the next minute we could hear the dog worrying something but a short distance away. Fifty yards from the edge of the park we found a big grizzly backed up against a spruce pine, and fencing like a boxing master to protect himself from the attack of the dogs. The dogs knew enough to keep out of the reach of his paws, but they made such savage and persistent feints at him that the old fellow was considerably worked up. We didn't know then, but we very quickly learned from the dogs' tactics that bruin had very probably been driven to take the defensive attitude against the tree by savage nips at his rear.

The dogs occupied his attention so fully that he didn't notice our approach until we were half way to him. We were just thinking of firing at him, in fact, when he saw us. He at once made a savage dash at the dogs and then scuttled off.

Before he had taken ten steps Goorkah had him by one hind leg and Monocular by the other. The grizzly didn't seem to mind it much, however. He lumbered heavily, yet quite rapidly along, dragging the dogs after him as though they had simply been so much dead weight fastened to his flanks.

"Cling to him Goorkah; good dog, Monoc!" shouted the Englishman, as we followed on behind at a run. We were afraid to shoot, for fear of hitting the dogs, in the uncertain light. The big grizzly hustled along, scattering over fallen timber and crashing through thickets of baby spruce, the dogs clinging on behind with genine bulldog tenacity, never for an instant losing their first grip. Whenever the bear dragged them across a patch of bright moonlight we could see that they were bracing themselves to try and hold him back.

With all this, it was as much as we could do to keep up with the procession, running our level best. At about 300 yards from the park the bear lumbered down a rocky bank, ran through the tumbled boulders and hurrying waters of a dashing mountain stream, and up the opposite bank. The opposite bank was pretty steep, and gave the dogs a great advantage. To this they seemed keenly alive, and we could see them bracing themselves pluckily to drag the bear back or stop his speed. Their dogged resistance was beginning to tell a little on the grizzly by this time, anyhow, and, while striving to gain the last few strides up the bank, they succeeded in holding him for a moment.

We came the first opportunity to shoot without hitting the dogs, and I fired a shot. The slope of the bank brought his head pretty well above the dogs, and all three of us let drive at this important member of bruin's body at once. The bear staggered back and rolled over. Loosing their hold on his legs, the dogs now sprang behind him and seized him by the back of his neck. By doing this, and keeping beyond the reach of the grizzly's murderous paws, they showed at once their thorough training as bear dogs. Moreover, their tactics in clinging to his hamstrings with his claws were not to be despised as a measure of good, sound judgment in dealing with a bear.

We, supposing the bear was probably done for, started to wade through the shallow stream, not over knee deep, when, without a moment's warning, he uttered a roar of rage and, making a snap at the dogs, dashed savagely toward us. We were not more than a dozen yards away, and, although we had our Winchesters at half cock and ready, as we thought, to shoot at the bear's warning of danger, so sudden was the bear's charge upon us that not the dogs instantly seized him by the hind legs again, I believe he would have reached us before we could have fired. As it was, we had a pretty narrow margin of safety left us, for, as he charged us, open-mouthed, Sagebrush, who happened to be a little in advance, thrust the muzzle of his Winchester in his mouth and fired. Sagebrush's bullet crashed clean through his brain, and the grizzly rolled over, dead as a mackerel.

In the morning, when we came to examine the dogs, Sagebrush and I were astonished to find that they had received scarcely a scratch to tell that they had been in a close tussle with a grizzly. The Englishman wasn't much surprised at it, though. He said they had been through such a schooling with bears that there was little danger of their getting hurt.

The next day we turned up a cinnamon she bear and two yearling cubs. The cubs were big, healthy youngsters, over half grown. We bowled over the old lady and one of the cubs, and then for about fifteen minutes stood by and enjoyed the prettiest kind of a fight between the other cub and the dogs.

The cub was big and strong enough to give them a lively time of it, and it was a pretty sight to see the dogs sail in and manœuvre around to help each other out. They seemed to understand each other very bit as well as human beings. While Goorkah would tempt the bear to make a rush at him, Monocular would dart behind and give him a vicious nip on the rump. When the bear would whirl round after Monocular, then Goorkah would dart in and grab him.

By these tactics they managed to keep the bear spinning round and round pretty lively. They seemed to enjoy the sport quite as much as we did ourselves. Now and then, at first, the bear would try to dash off and escape, but he wasn't so large but that the dogs could, by straining his hind legs and bracing for all they were worth, soon bring him to a halt.

Once, but only once, did the bear manage to inflict any punishment in return for all that he was receiving. For a few moments the bear stood stock still, as though tired of defending himself—an artful ruse to tempt the dogs to attack him in front. The ruse succeeded, for Monocular, by way of stirring him up, advanced and attempted to nip him by the nose. Like a stroke of lightning the bear's paw flew out and fetched the dog a swipe that knocked him over and badly lacerated his back. It would have fared still worse with him but for the prompt and intelligent action of Goorkah. The sight of his comrade knocked over seemed to electrify him. Almost as swift as the stroke of the enemy's paw was his "spring as he hit clear on the bear's back and seized him savagely by the ear. The bear rolled over and tried to get at him with his handy paws, but the dog was too quick, and sprang away. Before the bear could recover his feet both dogs were trying to tear pieces out of his flanks.

By this time the bear was in a furious temper; he made mad dashes at his assailants, and sometimes looked more than half inclined to quit the dogs and make for us. We were viewing the battle about fifty paces off.

The Englishman to whom the dogs belonged now quietly declared his intention of going up and finishing the bear with his bowie. We tried to persuade him that he had better not be foolhardy, for with the bear in such a towering rage he would stand a good chance of getting badly mauled. But he insisted that he had done the same thing in India plenty of times with the aid of the dogs, and could do it again.

He spoke a word of encouragement to the dogs, and they, seeming to comprehend at once what their master was going to do, redoubled their activity. They didn't keep the bear so absorbed, however, but that he saw his new assailant, and endeavored to rush to the attack. The dogs would not allow this, however, and, as he approached, bruin raised himself up to receive him with the usual cordial embrace. The Englishman was then within half a dozen paces of the bear. Each dog had his fangs firmly planted in poor bruin's hide just beneath the shoulders, and they were pulling fractically back on him, as though to hold him from making any aggressive movement against their master.

It was a thrilling, yet really a comical sight, after all—the bear, about five feet high, standing bolt upright, champing his teeth and foaming with rage, with a dog pinioning him on either side, and the hunter advancing on him knife in hand. For the world, I couldn't help comparing the bear to some desperate criminal brought to bay, the dogs, two detectives who had just run him down, and the man, some stern minion of the law, stepping forward to secure him.

As the Englishman stepped up almost to within strike distance, he spoke again to the dogs. In a twinkling they redoubled their efforts to jerk the bear over on his back. Bruin, quite unprepared for this movement, partly lost his balance. Before he had recovered it, the old Indian sportsman sprang forward, made a quick lunge with the bowie, and then stepped back. The bear struck at him savagely, but the blow came too late; he only beat the air. The dogs still held on, the crimson stream spurted from the knife-wound as from the throat of a stuck pig, the bear began to stagger, the dogs left him, and he rolled over and expired. It was cleverly done.

HUNTING STORIES FROM MAINE.

The Yarns that Reach Bangor from the Haunts of the Deer and the Moose.

BANGOR, Dec. 24.—Lots of the mighty huntsmen of this town are going to put in the Christmas holidays devastating the woods of whatever game may have been overlooked during the Thanksgiving campaign, and great are the preparations making for a hilarious time in the wilderness. Within a short distance of Bangor, over among the rugged hills of Hancock county, and half a day's journey northward, in the picturesque vicinity of Nicatous Lake, may be had the best of sport of all kinds. If the sportsman is looking for big meat there are plenty of bears to make things interesting; or, if he doesn't want anything quite so hearty as that, there are lots of deer, with all sorts of small game, and fine pickerel fishing to fill in the chinks. Some of the Bangor sportsmen have camps of their own—big, comfortable log houses, such as loggers dwell in—in the sections mentioned, and every year at about this season they make up parties and go out to these forest retreats for a high old time. They take plenty of what they call "civilized grub" with them, many jugs of "bait," and a cook, who is always a man of varied talents and fertile resources—a man, in fact, who is equally proficient in hunting, fishing, cooking, mixing punches, and, if occasion requires, at spinning yarns. These parties have a jolly time of it, and, as a rule, grow fat as bears in berry season, and bring back, in addition to trophies of the hunt, a stock of able-bodied yarns that makes them the envy of all their friends.

The bear hunters are doing well, judging by the number of carcasses brought into this city, but the people who go after deer complain of the lack of snow, which makes tracking difficult. Some queer yarns about deer and moose hunting are coming in. The other day, in a town not far north of Bangor, a young fellow saw a deer in an open field and started after it, firing sixteen shots as he went. Some of the charges struck the animal, a good-sized buck, seeing which the young fellow rushed up and knocked him over, expecting to finish him in short order. But that was a very lively buck, and when the hunter began sawing away at his jugular with his jack knife he just threw up his heels and kicked that same hunter about half way across the lot. The sportsman picked himself up, and while he stood rubbing himself the buck got up, too, and trotted off into the woods. The young man's friends are advising him to get a new gun and practice at the broadside of Mount Katahdin.

Another young man up in Ashland, Aroostook county, had better luck, and he didn't go looking for it, either. He was on his way home from a dance one night about a week ago, when a large animal appeared in the road just ahead of him. Drawing a small revolver, the young fellow fired a shot at the animal to scare it away, but the animal didn't scare worth a cent, and made a threatening move toward him, whereupon the young man, who *was* scared, blazed away with the remaining four chambers of his weapon. At this the beast disappeared in the woods, and the young man breathed freer, but almost immediately the big black figure loomed up in front of him again. He had barely time to push another cartridge into his revolver and fire point blank at the animal. This shot told, and the dark object rolled over into the bushes with a crash. The young fellow then summoned all his nerve, and, leaping upon the beast, cut its throat. He then sped home at a gait that would discount Paddy Fitzgerald, and related his adventure. The latter and all the other men at the house laughed, said he was a crank, and that he would have a cow to pay for. But when they went back with lanterns to the scene of the conflict they found an enormous bull moose just gasping his last. Then the young fellow stood up and had his laugh, while five of them nearly burst their suspenders getting that moose onto a sled. They take guns along when they go to dances in Aroostook now.

Speaking of big moose, A. B. Douglass, who lives over in the Dead River country, claims to have killed the moose he recently bagged in Maine. That is considerable to claim, but if Mr. Douglass has got the measurements right his game is a little ahead of anything in the moose line that I ever heard of. The animal in question was brought down after a long chase, and measured as follows: Base of antlers to end of tail, 9 feet; height, 7 feet 4 inches, or 22 hands; girth, 8 feet 4 inches.

They are killing a good many deer over on Union River, and reports indicate that some of the sportsmen have forgotten the rule of three. Some men are such hogs that if the law allowed them ninety-nine deer in a season they would want to make it an even hundred.

Foxes are very numerous in Penobscot county this season, and very bold, too. One day last week a big red fellow trotted leisurely down the main street of a large village not far from this city, and disappeared in the woods before anybody could get a shot at him. Bangor market is supplied with coons and rabbits galore. The rabbits sell at five cents each, but few people seem to want them at that. They are not worth shooting, poor bunnies.

THE OLD SETTLER TAKES A HAND.

Worked Up by a Letter from One of Maria's Relations, He Tells a Bear Story.

"'Squire," said the Old Settler, after he had comfortably seated himself in the tavern the other evening and filled his pipe, "be you tol'able good on figurin' out handwrite w'at hain't 'dzactly ez plain ez print?"

"Wall, Major," replied the 'Squire. "I usety could read 'Bijer Beans's handwrite, an' his'n were so twisted an' so crooked th't wunst w'en he writ an order fer a pound o' alum an' sent his boy, Ben, to town to git it at the drug store, the drug store thort it were a p'escription fer ringbone in hosses, an' made up the dose accordin'. But then 'Bijer's spellin' an' puncturatin' was allus ez c'rect ez one o' ol' Daboll's 'rethmetic sums, an' consekently I didn't never hev no trouble o' readin' his handwrite. If the spellin' an' the puncturatin' is c'rect, Major, I don't keer how twisted an' crooked the list is th't anybody daubs on paper. I kin foller it. I kin git at the p'int o' his own handwrite th't ye want me to figure out, Major? If it is, I'll try it, but I'm skeery 'bout bein' able to do it."

"That's a 'sinnawation, 'Squire, th't some folks'd flare up an' git mad at," said the Old Settler; "but I hain't one o' them kind o' folks. This here hain't none o' my own handwrite, but if it were, the chances is, b'gosh, th't it'd read sumpin' like this here:

"'Friend 'Squire—Dear Sir: If ye hain't wore them gum boots o' mine all out th't ye borried o' me to go a-fishin' this last summer, an' if this any o' them fish hooks o' mine left ye anywhere an' ye kin send 'em back to onorter, ez mebby I could use 'em. Ez to the overhauls, this is the time o' year w'en they mowt come in kinder handy, if yuv got time to fetch 'em back. An' obleege yer ol' friend, the Major.

"P. S.—M'riar 'd like to know if th' couldn't be some way fixed so th't yer w'ife could sen' hum that flat iron she borried fer only half an hour las' spring. She needn't bother 'bout payin' back the sallyratus an' the cup o' lasses, but them clothes pins an' the quittin' frame wouldn't ye be so usefuller th'n they'd be jist now. Yours truly. Love to all.

"The chances is, 'Squire, th't mebby if this here was my handwrite, it'd sound sumpin' like that air, havin' the facts to back it. The spellin' an' the puncturatin' mowt'n be jist 'cordin' to Dan'l Webster, but it'd be my sentiments, an' it'd be M'riar's sentiments, spellin' or no spellin', puncturatin' or no puncturatin', and I'll bet 'leven dollars an' a quarter th't ye couldn't git no p'escription fer ringbone in hosses outen it, nuther, b'gosh! lmighty! An' if yer listeain' to me ye kin bank me say so!"

The Old Settler got bolder and louder as he proceeded, and it was plain to all the boys that the 'Squire had put his foot in it this time. But the 'Squire was diplomatic, and as the diplomacy he used on the Old Settler was strong and hot, with plenty of sugar and spices in it, and filled the glass to the brim, the smile soon came back to the Old Settler's face, and amicable relations were resumed.

"'No, 'Squire," said the Old Settler, after the delightful tipple had become a part of himself, "this here hain't none o' my handwrite. If were writ by a relation o' M'riar's way out in Colorady, wherever that mowt be, an' it 'pears to me th't if any feller were lookin' arter a p'escription fer the wuss ill th't could be tol', he could fin' it right in this here missile from M'riar's relation. Ye see, awhile ago he writ to M'riar, an' says th't she should tell Uncle Silas, meanin' me, th't if he wanted to hev circuses with b'ar, fer to pack up an' come out to Colorado, 'Wy,' writ this relation o' M'riar's, 'me an' another feller was out t'other day an' we knocked six ton o' b'ar meat over afore supper.'

"'That's a smart relation o' your'n, M'riar,' I says, 'but he hain't ben brought up in the straight an' narrer path,' says I. 'Ha' ye shot ol' Jim Flack a lyin,' says I, 'an' yer know, M'riar,' says I, 'that w'en Jim Flack died his okal wa'n't livin'. Six ton o' b'ar meat!' says I, 'leetle' sorry fer the man ez had it in his heart to p'warricate so. 'Wy, great Beeswax!' says I, 'M'riar, do you know how many b'ars make six ton? Six ton 'low ten hundred poun' apiece,' says I, w'ich is big heft, ez b'ars runs. That'd be ten to the ton,' says I, 'makin' sixty b'ars fer the six ton o' dead b'ar meat,' says I. 'Sixty b'ars,' says I, 'M'riar, 'd fill that meetin' house o' your'n from cellar to roof. M'riar,' says I, 'write to yer relation an' tell him his Uncle Silas is sorry fer him; an' tell him,' says I, 'to repent o' them sixty b'ars 'fore it's too late,' says I. 'If he has any hopes o' meetin' me on t'other side o' Jurdan,' says I. 'M'riar.'

"'That skeert M'riar, an' she writ him a scorcher, an' ast him how could anybody dare to stand up an' tell he had killed six b'ar an hour fer ten hours? Wall, w'at does this relation o' M'riar's do but set down an' write this here letter back, an' declares up an' down th't w'at he tol' us were true ez preachin'. 'He an' t'other feller knocked over the six ton o' b'ar meat,' he says, 'jist ez I done yer hearin' says he, 'th' wa'n't sixty b'ars,' says he. 'Th' was only ten,' says he. Only ten! Whar's Annynias, 'Squire? an' whar's Sappiry? This here man, 'sted o' repentin' o' the six ton o' b'ar meat, sets down an' clinches the p'warrication by sayin' th't th' wa'n't only six ton o' b'ar meat, but th't it unly took ten b'ar to pervide it! I've see wicked ginerations in my time, 'Squire, but this is the wickedest an' perwersest one I've see sence I were a young un. It is, b'gosh!"

"'Wy, say, Major," one of the boys ventured to remark, "that's a reasonable statement enough. Bears are about that country often weigh as much as fifteen hundred pounds apiece. They are grizzlies, and——"

"I don't keer a cuss whether they'm grizzlies or gruzzlies, or brizzlies or bruzzlies, or snizzlies or snuzzlies, b'gosh!" shouted the Old Settler, thumping the table with his fist; "I tell ye I know they'm b'ar, hain't they? They'm b'ar? An' w'at is this Colorady more'n any other deestric' th't it should hev b'ar th't runs one and a half to the ton? W'at county is Colorady in, anyhow? W'y, consarn it all! Sugar Swamp deestric, in her bes' days, never had no b'ar th't could heft better'n five to the ton, an' is th' anybody gointer git up an' tell me th't this Colorady sets itself up to beat Sugar Swamp on b'ars? Is th'? If th' is, he better sew down, an' I'll hef to squash him down flatter'n a load o' brick 'd squash a punkin!"

There was silence for a while in the tavern, the Old Settler's indignation being so deep that no one deemed it wise to take the chances with him. By and by he cooled down and said:

"But I'm agointer write back to relation of M'riar an' a letter myself. I'll write him sumpin' th't'll make him 'shamed o' hisself. It won't be no scoldin', it won't be no fault findin' th't I'll lay afore him in black an' w'ite. Not a durn bit it won't. It'll be a straight, plain leetle scribble o' truth. It'll be a straight, plain leetle scribble in the history o' Sugar Swamp deestric', a leetle recomembence o' the ol' times w'en I were a slasher in the woods. It'll be a statement ez to b'ar so clear an' simple th't he'll see the truth stickin' out all over it, like prickers on a Jim-son weed, an' if he don't git up his voice an' howl 'Ef I'm a b'ar, I'm a b'ar! I hain't no shame in him, an' Colorady's the place for him. 'Squire, do ye 'member Lippy Conkright, the travellin' doctor o' Wild Gander Ridge?"

"Conkright?" said the 'Squire, musingly. "Conkright? No, Major; I can't say ez I do 'mom'ries. Ye say he were a travellin' doctor? I jest wondered if a feller by the name o' Pete Copperbut, th't married 'Lize Dillwagon's dartar Mary—stuck-up Mary, we usety call her, 'cause she had a pair o' cowhide shoes, an' alluz walked in 'em to meet-in', stid o' carryin' of 'em in her han' an' puttin' 'em on w'en she got thar, sassy like th' rest o' th' gals ez had shoes—an' Pete lived some'rs over 'long Wild Gander Ridge. Mebby he mowt ha' ben some relative o' the travellin' doctor's, but 'tain't likely, nuther, ez Pete were a fiddler, an' if I don't disremember, I think he left that deestric' ah of a sudden, wunst, an' come fer th' ol' folks to git holt o' him. Pete went away 'bout the same time, an' wa'n't never heerd on ag'in. Guess I don't 'member none o' the Conkrights, Major."

"Wall, th' wa'n't none but Lippy, th't I ever know'd," said the Old Settler, "but he were a hull fam'ly hisself, 'sides bein' okal to the team th' I were a-driv'n. Th' wa'n't much use fer a doctor in the Sugar Swamp deestric' in them days, ez th' wa'n't never but two allin's thar, sniffles in sheep an' the agur. But Lippy usety like to git 'roun' to Sugar Swamp, 'cause me an' him alluz took a day off an' went b'ar hunting, w'ich he liked better'n pill peddlin'. Lippy were a sight to cure the blues. He were short an' thick, an' th' were so much room took up by his upper lip that th' wa'n't sca'cely any left on his face for his chin, an' that's the reason he were called Lippy. Th' wa'n't nothin' th't he couldn't ez a bullet an' not much bigger, an' they sot plumb up agin Lippy's nose, w'ich were narrer at the top an' flarin' at the bottom, an' were a trifle red. Lippy had wooly little eyebrows, an' his hair were woolly, an' his ears was pulled down close to his skull like little wings. But the crownin' piece o' Lippy's beauty were his legs. They wa'n't any too short, but the bow in 'em were amazin'. They was bent so th't it wouldn't ha' ben no trick at all to chuck a good-sized b'ar cub right through 'em, 'twixt the knees, 'thout techin' nuthin' else.

"The last time I ever see Lippy Conkright I had to larf. I thort w'en I see him th't a museum must ha' come to the clearin', an' th't Lippy were it. But I soon got 'quainted with him, an' I hadn't ben 'quainted with him long 'fore he says to me one day:

"'Cosh! said he, 'ain't you a-fetchin' fer a b'ar or two to-day?' says he.

"'Wall,' I says, 'setch things has ben done.'

"'An' so me an' Lippy went out, an' ez we was on the hump o' the hill I says to him over, an' I says to myself, 'We won't git no b'ar, not if the b'ar hev Lippy fer bait.' But he were the largest one ever bagged in Maine. That is considerable to claim, but if Mr. Douglass has got the measurements right his game is a little ahead of anything in the moose line that I ever heard of. The animal in question was brought down after a long chase, and measured as follows: Base of antlers to end of tail, 9 feet; height, 7 feet 4 inches, or 22 hands; girth, 8 feet 4 inches.

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"'Squire," said the Old Settler, after he had comfortably seated himself in the tavern the other evening and filled his pipe, "be you tol'able good on figurin' out handwrite w'at hain't 'dzactly ez plain ez print?"

"Wall, Major," replied the 'Squire. "I usety could read 'Bijer Beans's handwrite, an' his'n were so twisted an' so crooked th't wunst w'en he writ an order fer a pound o' alum an' sent his boy, Ben, to town to git it at the drug store, the drug store thort it were a p'escription fer ringbone in hosses, an' made up the dose accordin'. But then 'Bijer's spellin' an' puncturatin' was allus ez c'rect ez one o' ol' Daboll's 'rethmetic sums, an' consekently I didn't never hev no trouble o' readin' his handwrite. If the spellin' an' the puncturatin' is c'rect, Major, I don't keer how twisted an' crooked the list is th't anybody daubs on paper. I kin foller it. I kin git at the p'int o' his own handwrite th't ye want me to figure out, Major? If it is, I'll try it, but I'm skeery 'bout bein' able to do it."

"That's a 'sinnawation, 'Squire, th't some folks'd flare up an' git mad at," said the Old Settler; "but I hain't one o' them kind o' folks. This here hain't none o' my own handwrite, but if it were, the chances is, b'gosh, th't it'd read sumpin' like this here:

"'Friend 'Squire—Dear Sir: If ye hain't wore them gum boots o' mine all out th't ye borried o' me to go a-fishin' this last summer, an' if this any o' them fish hooks o' mine left ye anywhere an' ye kin send 'em back to onorter, ez mebby I could use 'em. Ez to the overhauls, this is the time o' year w'en they mowt come in kinder handy, if yuv got time to fetch 'em back. An' obleege yer ol' friend, the Major.

"P. S.—M'riar 'd like to know if th' couldn't be some way fixed so th't yer w'ife could sen' hum that flat iron she borried fer only half an hour las' spring. She needn't bother 'bout payin' back the sallyratus an' the cup o' lasses, but them clothes pins an' the quittin' frame wouldn't ye be so usefuller th'n they'd be jist now. Yours truly. Love to all.

"The chances is, 'Squire, th't mebby if this here was my handwrite, it'd sound sumpin' like that air, havin' the facts to back it. The spellin' an' the puncturatin' mowt'n be jist 'cordin' to Dan'l Webster, but it'd be my sentiments, an' it'd be M'riar's sentiments, spellin' or no spellin', puncturatin' or no puncturatin', and I'll bet 'leven dollars an' a quarter th't ye couldn't git no p'escription fer ringbone in hosses outen it, nuther, b'gosh! lmighty! An' if yer listeain' to me ye kin bank me say so!"

The Old Settler got bolder and louder as he proceeded, and it was plain to all the boys that the 'Squire had put his foot in it this time. But the 'Squire was diplomatic, and as the diplomacy he used on the Old Settler was strong and hot, with plenty of sugar and spices in it, and filled the glass to the brim, the smile soon came back to the Old Settler's face, and amicable relations were resumed.

"'No, 'Squire," said the Old Settler, after the delightful tipple had become a part of himself, "this here hain't none o' my handwrite. If were writ by a relation o' M'riar's way out in Colorady, wherever that mowt be, an' it 'pears to me th't if any feller were lookin' arter a p'escription fer the wuss ill th't could be tol', he could fin' it right in this here missile from M'riar's relation. Ye see, awhile ago he writ to M'riar, an' says th't she should tell Uncle Silas, meanin' me, th't if he wanted to hev circuses with b'ar, fer to pack up an' come out to Colorado, 'Wy,' writ this relation o' M'riar's, 'me an' another feller was out t'other day an' we knocked six ton o' b'ar meat over afore supper.'

"'That's a smart relation o' your'n, M'riar,' I says, 'but he hain't ben brought up in the straight an' narrer path,' says I. 'Ha' ye shot ol' Jim Flack a lyin,' says I, 'an' yer know, M'riar,' says I, 'that w'en Jim Flack died his okal wa'n't livin'. Six ton o' b'ar meat!' says I, 'mom'ries, anybodd'n 'd hev to git up his voice an' howl 'Ef I'm a b'ar, I'm a b'ar! I hain't no shame in him, an' Colorady's the place for him. 'Squire, do ye 'member Lippy Conkright, the travellin' doctor o' Wild Gander Ridge?"

"Conkright?" said the 'Squire, musingly. "Conkright? No, Major; I can't say ez I do 'mom'ries, anybodd'n 'd hev to git up his voice an' howl 'Ef I'm a b'ar, I'm a b'ar!' Ye say he were a travellin' doctor? I jest wondered if a feller by the name o' Pete Copperbut, th't married 'Lize Dillwagon's dartar Mary—stuck-up Mary, we usety call her, 'cause she had a pair o' cowhide shoes, an' alluz walked in 'em to meet-in', stid o' carryin' of 'em in her han' an' puttin' 'em on w'en she got thar, sassy like th' rest o' th' gals ez had shoes—an' Pete lived some'rs over 'long Wild Gander Ridge. Mebby he mowt ha' ben some relative o' the travellin' doctor's, but 'tain't likely, nuther, ez Pete were a fiddler, an' if I don't disremember, I think he left that deestric' ah of a sudden, wunst, an' come fer th' ol' folks to git holt o' him. Pete went away 'bout the same time, an' wa'n't never heerd on ag'in. Guess I don't 'member none o' the Conkrights, Major."

"Wall, th' wa'n't none but Lippy, th't I ever know'd," said the Old Settler, "but he were a hull fam'ly hisself, 'sides bein' okal to the team th' I were a-driv'n. Th' wa'n't much use fer a doctor in the Sugar Swamp deestric' in them days, ez th' wa'n't never but two allin's thar, sniffles in sheep an' the agur. But Lippy usety like to git 'roun' to Sugar Swamp, 'cause me an' him alluz took a day off an' went b'ar hunting, w'ich he liked better'n pill peddlin'. Lippy were a sight to cure the blues. He were short an' thick, an' th' were so much room took up by his upper lip th't th' wa'n't sca'cely any left on his face for his chin, an' that's the reason he were called Lippy. Th' wa'n't nothin' th't he couldn't ez a bullet an' not much bigger, an' they sot plumb up agin Lippy's nose, w'ich were narrer at the top an' flarin' at the bottom, an' were a trifle red. Lippy had wooly little eyebrows, an' his hair were woolly, an' his ears was pulled down close to his skull like little wings. But the crownin' piece o' Lippy's beauty were his legs. They wa'n't any too short, but the bow in 'em were amazin'. They was bent so th't it wouldn't ha' ben no trick at all to chuck a good-sized b'ar cub right through 'em, 'twixt the knees, 'thout techin' nuthin' else.

"The last time I ever see Lippy Conkright I had to larf. I thort w'en I see him th't a museum must ha' come to the clearin', an' th't Lippy were it. But I soon got 'quainted with him, an' I hadn't ben 'quainted with him long 'fore he says to me one day:

"'Cosh! said he, 'ain't you a-fetchin' fer a b'ar or two to-day?' says he.

"'Wall,' I says, 'setch things has ben done.'

"'An' so me an' Lippy went out, an' ez we was on the hump o' the hill I says to him over, an' I says to myself, 'We won't git no b'ar, not if the b'ar hev Lippy fer bait.' But he were the largest one ever bagged in Maine. That is considerable to claim, but if Mr. Douglass has got the measurements right his game is a little ahead of anything in the moose line that I ever heard of. The animal in question was brought down after a long chase, and measured as follows: Base of antlers to end of tail, 9 feet; height, 7 feet 4 inches, or 22 hands; girth, 8 feet 4 inches.

They are killing a good many deer over on Union River, and reports indicate that some of the sportsmen have forgotten the rule of three. Some men are such hogs that if the law allowed them ninety-nine deer in a season they would want to make it an even hundred.

Foxes are very numerous in Penobscot county this season, and very bold, too. One day last week a big red fellow trotted leisurely down the main street of a large village not far from this city, and disappeared in the woods before anybody could get a shot at him. Bangor market is supplied with coons and rabbits galore. The rabbits sell at five cents each, but few people seem to want them at that. They are not worth shooting, poor bunnies.

STORIES OF THE CARD TABLE

OLD-TIME RIVER GAMBLERS.

How Gamblers Cleaned Out the Passengers where Cards were Prohibited—Five Jacks in a Pack—Negroes Won and Lost.

From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

The old gamblers who linger around the city never tire of relating the glories of gambling on the river in the good old days before the railroads took away the travel. One of these old warriors was on a *Globe-Democrat* man's staff the other evening, and over many hot Scotches related many a thrilling tale.

"There ain't no more gambling now," said he, and no gamblers either. Look at what they call gamblers now—kids, nothing but kids, who ain't got neither sense nor manners. There ain't many of us old fellows left, and it's hard scratching most of the time to make connections regular with meals. The river used to be the place for gambling, but that's been dead for over twenty years, and I don't guess it'll ever come to life again. But those were the days, my boy—great days for the town, with thirty-six steamboats at the wharf all at once, the levee covered with drays, and every sport with stuff in his pockets and lots of good clothes.

"I guess there was 500 men who worked the boats between here and New Orleans, and there's no telling how much money they did pull off the travellers. It was dead easy money, too, all the time. Everybody who travelled had lots of stuff, and every one was willing to bet and bet high; so that when a fellow did win he won right out of the hole at once. Those Southern planters used to just lose money like fun, and were skinned right and left. Occasionally they caught on, and there was a shooting match, but the boys didn't take much chance on being plugged. I've seen forty gamblers on one boat, the John Dickey. That was in '57, when the officers at Natchez cleaned all the gamblers out of town. The whole gang met the boat at the wharf and started to come aboard, but the Captain wouldn't let them on unless they promised not to play a card aboard. They promised, and in took them on, and the boat came on up the river. You never saw a tireder-looking lot of gamblers in your life than them. They hadn't anything to do, and some of them looked like they'd just as soon jump overboard as not. They kept their promise not to play a card, but, Lord, they did skin passengers on other games.

"George Divoll got a little piece of tin foil, wrapped it around some salt, and sitting down near the stove warmed it and put it up against his cheek. He'd hold it there awhile, warm it again, and put it back. Presently a passenger, who had got acquainted with George, came to pals, observed his actions and inquired what he was doing. George said he was curing his neuralgia, and he explained the cure. After he had done so he kept up the thing for a while, and then he left the cure on the stove hearth and went out. Then George's pal marked the package, and suggested that it would be a good joke to change the salt for ashes, just to observe what strength Divoll's belief had in curing his neuralgia. The passenger's plaster fell in and changed the salt for ashes and left it on the hearth. Divoll comes back and begins his monkey business over again, and the planter comes around and guys George about the cure being no good, and finally Georgie is so disgusted he's curing himself that the planter gets hot and says he'll bet there ain't any salt in the tin foil. George puts him off, and his pal shows the planter what a dead sure thing he's got, and works him up for George in great shape. They finally bet—$300 was the money—and, of course, George shifts a duplicate of his first package on the planter, and shows up the salt. The planter was clean 'cornered,' but he was working George on a dead sure thing and couldn't squeal.

"Well, sir, those gamblers got all on that boat; and, though they didn't touch a card, they cleaned out everybody else of that had stuff. We landed at a woodpile to take on wood, and the passengers all got together in the bank, and the gamblers all got to betting about running jumps, and of course the passengers dropped in. So they'd run off the gangplank and have the jump, which the first gambler would say, 'Hello, what's here?' and stop. Behind the tree one of the gang had begun throwing three-card monte, while the others got up the jumping scheme. The gamblers won just to make the game good, and the way those fellows skinned the passengers was horrible. The Capts knew on to the game, and when the boat started off up stream the whole gang—forty of 'em—were left marooned there in the woods on a cold night. But they took the next boat up or down, and worked their way up this way or down to New Orleans.

"That wasn't gambling—it was robbing; but that's what went on gambling in those times. The fellows had to be pretty slick, I'll tell you. When a boat started out of New Orleans say, a couple of gamblers would be on board. They were often well-educated fellows, and always fine dressers. All they did was just get acquainted with the men and money, and size up how much they had. This was easily done, because card playing was the only thing to pass away the time. These cappers wouldn't win any money. They were just to do the gentlemen; but when they got off the boat their pals came on at some one river town, with full knowledge of how much money there was on the boat, what men had it, and how these men were best approached. It wasn't hard to get acquainted, and it wasn't hard to get up a game of euchre after a drink. Once the game was on, the thing was easy. The dealer fixed the deck, and dealt out a good poker hand with the mark, but a better one to his own partner, who promptly declared:

"'I've got a good hand I'd like to bet on.'

"'So have I,' replied Mr. Mark, and then they got into a betting and the stranger got skinned right and left. The cards were dealt and marked on the back so that he didn't have any chance at all to win. All the playing was done with old star-backs. I've seen fellows pick every card in a pack and call it without missing once. I've seen them shuffle them one for one all through from the bottom to the top, they were in the same position after a