The Bossier Banner.

Established July 1, 1859. "A Map of Busy Life; Its Fluctuations and its Vast Concerns." Subscription, $1 a Year, in Advance.

VOLUME 32. BENTON, LA., APRIL 27, 1893. NO. 9.

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BATTLES WITH BRUIN.

Hair-Lifting Bear Stories From California.

EARLY DAYS WHEN HUNTERS HAD REAL SPORT—THE CANONS ALIVE WITH GRIZZLIES—EXPLOITS OF COL. BUTTS IN THE BUSH.

[Special Correspondence of the Times-Star.]

LOS ANGELES, CAL., MARCH 3.—With the rapid and almost total disappearance of the grizzly bear, one of the most daring yet favorite amusements of the native Californian Mexican's passes away. In the early days the canons were alive with bears, and even up to the days of the boom, when the State was staked off into town lots, they were comparatively plentiful. Now, they are hunted with long-distance repeating rifles. In the early days, five or six lazadores, with their viatas, would go on a bear hunt, armed only with lances and butcher-knives. They were very expert in throwing the viata.

As soon as a bear is seen they circle around him at a safe distance.—Each lazadore twirls his viata in the air, describing a circle, and in turn throws it at bruin. While they are making ready the bear sits down on his hind feet, looking at first one man and then the other, and when the viata is thrown he makes an effort to dodge it. Sometimes he stands erect upon his hind feet and waltzes around in anxious expectancy, watching the Mexicans as they uncoil their ropes of hair preparatory to lassooing him. He seems to divine what they are up to, and as the rope with a whiz; whir-r and whip describes a circle in the air and is about to entrap him he reaches out with one of his forepaws to catch the loop. If he is successful the Mexican lets go—gives him the rope.

Then another viata is thrown from another direction and he is caught by the hind foot. While he is attempting to kick out of the tightened coil, another viata is thrown around his other hind foot. The viatas are now fastened to a tree and the horsemen keep well out of his way and amid his nashing of teeth, growling and frantic efforts to get at them they ersily succeed in lassoing his other feet, when he is at once thrown upon his back, where he lies helpless, when the lazadores approach and kill him with thrust of their lances.

A pioneer tells the following stories:

"On one hunt I took only two lazadores. While we had been separated for a few moments they run upon a grizzly and commenced trying to lasso him. One of the lazadores threw his rope around the bear's body instead of his outstretched forepaws. The bear seized the vita and began to draw it in, like hauling in a clothes-line. Unfortunately the other end of the vita had not been unloosened from the pommel of the man's saddle, and himself and horse were drawn in by the bear. The saddle turned, the man fell off, and as the bear grabbed him, the frightened horse ran away; also the other Mexican. I ran up at that moment, placed my revolver at the side of the bear's head and fired. The bear released the Mexican and made towards me, when the Mexican, only slightly wounded, ran away, leaving me and the bear to fight it out. But the bear was nearly done for, and I run and got behind a tree. As the wounded grizzly came reeling toward the tree, I reached around and gave him another shot, which settled him. I never saw nor heard of either of the Mexicans afterward. I do not suppose they stopped running until they got out of the State."

One of the most noted and desperate bear fights in California—the land of the grizzly—was one between an editor and a grizzly. Col. William Butts was the senoir editor of the Southern Californian, published at Los Angeles, in 1853. Butts was an adopted son of the statesman, Thomas H. Benton of Missouri, and, being of an adventurous and roaming disposition, came to California. Taking a vacation from his arduous editorial duties. which consisted principally of writing up murders, Mexican fandangoes and hangings by Vigilantes, he went up into San Luis Obispo with a party on a bear hunt.

They rendezvoused at the ranch of Capt. Wilson, where unbounded hospitality was dispensed. There was one grizzly in the neighborhood so large and powerful that he could walk away with a sheep, a calf or even a cow in his mouth. It was the special object of this party to kill this grizzly, the terror of the neighborhood. Finally the bear was found on the edge of a plain near a chaparral. A volley was fired into him, several of the shots taking effect. He ran into a canon in the Santa Margarita mountains and was tracked to a thicket. The party commenced to beat the bush, as an invitation for the bear to come out and be shot; but, being rather slow Butts followed the bear's track into the thicket.

His companions in vain remonstrated against this desperate and useless act. The trail soon entered the dry, sandy bed of an arroyo seco (dry creek), and Butts easily followed for about a half a mile, when he lost it. He stopped a moment to deliberate as to which direction he could probably pick up the trail, when he looked around and saw the bear lying under a clump of trees on the bank of the dry creek and within about ten feeet of him.

They looked at each other square in the face for a second, and, as Butts was about leveling his old-fashioned yeager, the bear, with a terrific growl sprang upon him. As he fell beneath the weight of the huge animal he got his hunting knife out of its seabbard, and the battle for life began.

A few moments after Butts had left us we started in search of him. Following his tracks to the spot we found the bear dead and Butts frightfully mangled and apparently dead, lying by the side of the bear. His left arm and right leg fractured in several places; the flesh was literally torn in strips from his arms, body and legs, and the bones of his face so crushed that he was disfigured for life.

The bear having been severely wounded by our shots, was not quite a match for the editor, who plied his hunting knife as industriously as if he had been using the shears in the editorial room. It was found that his knife had twice penetrated the bear's lungs, once into the heart, and had made an inscision into his bowels nearly a foot in length. A litter was constructed, Butts taken to the ranch and a physician sent for. The Mexican major domo of the ranch, with several assistants and a wagon, was then sent after the bear. It weighed 2,100 pounds.

On convalessing, Editor Butts stated that as the bear jumped upon him, his first and every effort was to stick the eight-inch blade of his hunting knife into the bear's vital parts, which he continued to do so long as he had the strength, while the bear stood over him biting him and tearing his flesh off with his huge claws. "The last I recolect," said he, "was the bear dragging himself over me. It was at that moment no doubt that I gave him the fatal stab."

Col. Butts recovered, went to Nicaragua with Walker's filibusters, received several wounds from the effects of which he died, shortly after his return to Missouri.

"Andy" Sublette, a "Rocky Mountain Prince" and great bear hunter, came to Los Angeles in the "days of old—the days of gold." He emigrated from Shreveport, Louisiana, where he had been a merchant, to what is now Colorado. He built Fort Laramie, and when he sold it to the American Fur company, came to California, in 1854. Though a pioneer he was refined and cultured, and having accumulated a fortune in trading and trapping, lived sumptuously hence the title of the "Rocky Mountain Prince"

About that time bear were very numerous in California and Santa Monica canon was full of them. He had been wounded several times in bear fights, but that did nat lessen his enjoyment of a tussel with a grizzly, always carrying with him his faithful dog "Old Buck."

A party of five good shots went out on a hunt in Santa Monica canon, about twenty miles distance from Los Angeles. Sublette become separated from the party, ran upon a big bear and shot him, only slightly wounding him. Before he could reload his gun the bear was upon him. Sublette used his hunting knife with good effect, the dog also doing good work.

When the party arrived they found the bear dead. Sublette was lying by his side insensible, and the faithful dog also lacerated in a terrible manner, was licking the blood from his master's face. Sublette and the faithful animal were brought back to Los Angeles and well cared for.—The dog lay on a pallet by his master's bed, and when the unfortunate man in delirium, would shout, "At him, Buck!" the poor dog would raise his forepaws on the side of the bed, look his master in the face, and give a mournful growl, as if he understood the bewildered condition of his master's mind.

Frequently when his master was in this unconscious state, the dog would howl and moan most piteously. Finally, Sublette died, and his faithful dog rode in the funeral wagon by the side of the coffin, moaning in a half subdued tone and looking anxiously at the black coffin which shrouded his master from him. Of course, there was a large funeral, because Sublette had many friends among the pioneers. After the grave was filled the dog remainad and howled and moaned with a sadness and grief almost human. "Buck" was left at the grave side, under the belief that he would exhaust his grief and return to the hotel. But not so. He remained, and even refused to eat or drink, and on the third day died and was buried by the side of his master.

A few weeks later another party went out in the Sierra Madre range prospecting for bear. Among the party was one Frederick Stacer.—With his long Mississippi rifle he sallied out alone, and in a couple of hours came crawling back to camp about half dead. He stated that while walking along down on one side of a steep descending ridge he came upon two young grizzlies and shot one of them dead. After reloading his rifle he took after the other, which ran along the mountain in a horizontal line, which soon brought him and the bear to the summit of the ridge.

The squalling of the cub had attracted the attention of the old she bear on the other side of the ridge, and she followed, and all three met on a converged line—two to one.—"When the old bear saw me" said the bear fighter, "she ran back a few steps, stopped, looked at me for a second, and then commenced to walk deliberately towards me. I drew a bead on her eye and pulled, and—the gun missed fire for the first time, and when I needed it the most. I had forgotten, in my haste after killing the cub, to put a cap on the tube.

"The huge bear sprang upon me and we commenced rolling down the mountainside, the bear clawing and biting, and I trying to get loose.—The farther we went the more rapid, of course, became our motion, and finally we rolled over a rocky precipice about fifty feet in height, and lodged in the top of a live oak tree that grew at the bottom. I caught on to one of the tough yielding branches, which held me, but they gave way under the heiver weight of the bear, and she went crashing through to the bottom. Of course, it killed the bear."

J. M. SCANLAND.

WHY THEY ARE POOR.—Country editors always remain poor, but that is because they are not mean enough to get rich. In order to get rich it is only necessary to trust nobody; to befriend none, to get everything and save all you get; to stint ourselves and everybody belonging to us; to be friend to no man and have no man for our friend; to heap interest upon interest; cent upon cent; to be mean, miserly and dispised for thirty years, and riches will come as sure as disease and disappointment. And when pretty near enough wealth is collected by a disregard of the human heart at the expense of every enjoyment save that of wallowing in filthy meanness, death comes to finish the work. Country editors prefer to remain poor, live happy and die happy.—Jefferson Sentinel.

Memphis Commercial: There is death in dirt. No public money was ever more wisely spent than that expended in cleaning the streets of a city before the approach of hot weather. A city with clean streets and alleys and with private premises properly attended to is invincibly fortified against disease.

Sparta Ishmaelite: Some people object to better roads for the reason that the value of their property would be increased, thus increasing their taxes. This is a fact, though such folly is incomprehensible.

Sparta Ishmaelite: The counties that are hard at work building good public roads are going to lead all the other counties in progress and development. Live people don't like to make investments in dead counties.

Cincinnati Tribune: The anonymous scribbler is generally contemptible, and most frequently is a liar and coward as well.

Revenge is barren of itself; itself is the dreadful food it feeds on; its delight is murder; its satiety despair.—Schiller.

Rochester Democrat: A bottle is a very unfortunate thing. Every time it gets anything it gets it in the neck.

Galveston News: When a man finds a woman that there is nothing too good for, he wants her to take him.

Atlanta Constitution: When the chickens of sin come home to roost they have grown to be roosters.

The happiness of love is in action; its test is what one is willing to do for others.—Ben Hur.

We all borrow from the influences that ripen our lives.—Ben Hur.

The enemy of man is man.—Ben Hur.