

Burdock BLOOD BITTERS

WILL CURE OR RELIEVE BILIOUSNESS, DIZZINESS, JAUNDICE, ERYSIPELAS, HEADACHE, ACIDITY OF THE STOMACH, DRYNESS OF THE SKIN...

the lion and his head turned sharply over his shoulder, watching him.

He stood quite still, except for the slight shifting of his hind feet and lifting up of his quarters, which I knew meant mischief.

The lion probably thought so too, for he kept dodging to try and take his opponent by a flank movement. But the old horse knew his game, and pivoting on his forelegs, still brought his stern guns to bear on the enemy.

Soon, with a roar, the lion made a spring, but Marengo lashed out both heels together with such excellent judgment of time and distance, that catching him full in the chest he knocked him all of a heap to the ground, where he lay motionless.

The lion lay so still that I thought he was dead, or any rate quite *Apos du combat*, and was just running to pick up the bridle and follow Marengo when he set up on his haunches. This made me stop.

As he sat there with his head loosely wagging from side to side and mouth half open, he looked quite vacant and idiotic.

Suddenly his head stopped wagging, and he pricked his ears and by the flash of his eye and changed expression, I know he had seen me.

Only one thing was to be done, and I did it. The outermost tree was large and branched. To it I ran and up it I scrambled.

My companions about the round table which was garnished with aim bottles, glasses and piles of cigarettes, were all Frenchmen—three old Algerian colonists, the fourth an ex-captain of the navy, who had exchanged a life on the ocean wave for that of a hunter in three-quarters of the globe.

Before dinner I had picked up in the *salon Du Chaillu's* gorilla book, which I had never seen before, and my saying something about this turned the conversation in the garden upon wild beasts and the hunting of them.

Some wonderful stories were told, especially by the ex-sailor, though not a bit more wonderful than one hears from old Indian sportsmen.

For the matter of that the most extraordinary sporting-story I ever heard was told by—of all men in the world—a hare hunter, who capped therewith a snake and elephant narrative, quite unique of its kind.

Presently a short silence, caused by the uncovering and tasting of a new bottle of heritage, was broken by the eldest of the party, who had not said much before.

He was a good looking man of fifty, with beard grayer than his hair and a merry twinkle in his eyes. What he said I shall repeat for the sake of clearness in the first person, just as he told the story himself.

"The adventure which I am going to tell you, gentlemen, happened to me a good many years ago. It was my first serious interview with a lion. Like many serious things it had a comic side, too."

I was a young man then, and had been some half dozen years in Constantine, farming in partnership with a friend, an old colonist, whose acquaintance I had made on board ship coming out from Marseilles.

Our business was corn and cattle raising, and we did very well together, until my partner died with fever, and after that I took a dislike to the place. I thought I would shift my ground into this province, Algeria, push towards the frontier, and get a grant of government land and make a farm of it. So, getting a neighbor to give an eye on things in my absence I started on my prospecting expedition.

I say I, but I should say we, for there were three of us, sworn comrades, as ever the three were.

First, there was your humble servant; secondly, there was my horse, Marengo, and a better never looked through a bridle.

He was bred between a Barb sire and an English mare belonging to a colonial officer of whom I bought him in town when his regiment was going home. He stood about fifteen hands high, carried the Barb head and the rest of his body was all bone and muscle. His temper was good as his courage was high, but he had one failing, and that was an insuperable objection to the close proximity of anything except one thing, that stood on four legs.

We all have our peculiarities, and this was his. Bids were all very well, but multiply the legs by two and he let fly immediately, and never missed his aim.

Such was Marengo.

Thirdly there was Cognac, the faithful, the oldest, the most honest, and the wickedest little dog the world ever saw. He was more like a terrier than anything else, with a short yellow coat, a fox's head, very long ears and a very short tail. The shrillness of his bark poured your ears like a knife, but the awfulness of his howl he always howled if left alone.

During the four-month years I had him he seldom left me a day or night. On a journey he would run beside me, and when tired got up and sit in my wallet. The great pleasure of his life was to stand behind people and secretly bite their legs.

By some mysterious affinity he and Marengo were friends from the first. They now sleep under the same tree.

Well we started and after going over a good deal of ground I thought I had decided on a location, and turned my face homeward. My direction was by Alma to strike the great road that runs under the Atlas eastward into Constantine.

It was about a o'clock one morning when I had been some two hours in the saddle, that I emerged from a narrow valley, or ravine, through which the road ran, on to a sandy plain dotted with bushes and scrub.

I had just laid the reins on Marengo's neck, when suddenly he gave a tremendous shy that pitched me clean off.

The next minute, with a horrible roar, a lion sprang at his head.

I made sure he was on top of him, and he would have been, but as Marengo wheeled short around like lightning his hind legs, the steering reins caught his horse's forepaw and, as it were, tripped him, so that he fell sideways on the road.

The heavy jerk nearly brought the horse down, but the throat lash broke and the bridle was pulled over his ears, and recovering himself he darted away among a grove of trees that stood by the wayside.

An intent was the lion on the horse, that he paid no attention to my lying defenseless before him.

Crawling swiftly along the ground, he pursued Marengo, whom I gave up for lost—for his chances against the lithe brute among the trees was hopeless.

How very, as luck would have it, there was an open space about a dozen yards across. In the centre of this Marengo took his stand, and with his tail toward

he got up and walking quietly to the foot of the tree, without uttering a sound, sprang up at me with all his might.

He was quite a yard short, but I was so startled that I nearly lost my balance.

His coup having failed, he lay down right under the branch I was on, cringing his head on his paws as if to hide his mortification.

Suddenly the thought came into my mind: Why not make a devil and drop it on his back? I dismissed it as ridiculous, but it came again. As we have all, including our English friend here, been boys you know what I mean—not a fallen angel, but a gunpowder devil.

Good—well it seemed feasible, I would try it.

I had plenty of powder in my little flask, so pouring some into my hand, I moistened it well with spit and kneaded away until it came out a tiny Venousion of black paste. Then I formed the little crater; which I filled with a few grains of dry powder, and set it carefully on the branch.

My hand shook so with excitement I could hardly hold the flint and steel, but I struck and struck—the tinder ignited the Venousion.

Whif! whizz! The lion looked up directly, and I dropped it plum on the back of his neck. For an instant he did not seem to show what had happened; then with an angry growl, he jumped up and tore savagely at the big fry flea on his back, which sent a shower of sparks into his mouth and nose.

Again and again he tried, and then raved wildly about, using the most leonine language, for the devil had worked well down among the greasy hairs, and must have stung him like a hundred hornets. His back, hair and mane burst in flame and he shrieked with rage and terror.

Then he went stark staring mad, clapped his tail between his legs, laid back his ears, and rushed out of the grove at twenty miles an hour and disappeared up the ravine.

Almost as mad as the lion with joy and feeling sure that he was gone for good, I tumbled from the tree and ran along the road as hard as I could, with Cognac bubbling at my heels. By-and-by I had to call for the man who was still very hot, but I walked as fast as I could, looking out all the time for Marengo, who would not, I knew, go very far from his master.

Presently I spied him in a hollow. A whistle, and whinnying with delight he trotted up and laid his head on my shoulder.

In my hurry I had forgotten the bridle, but with my belt and handkerchief I extemporized a halter; tied one end round his nose, and catching up Cognac, mounted and galloped off defying all the lions in Africa to catch me.

There were still two hours before sunset to reach the village, and by hard riding I did it. That we all three enjoyed our suppers goes without saying. And that gentleman is my story."

"We agreed it was wonderful.

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