

AN AMIABLE BRUTE

The Black Bear is the Happy Hooligan of the Woods.

HE IS NOT A BIT FEROCIOUS.

This Much Maligned Animal is Just a Lazy, Playful Loafer That Avoids Men and Fights or Works Only When He is Compelled to Do So.

The black bear is neither ferocious nor dangerous. The most fitting name I have ever heard given him is the Happy Hooligan of the Woods. He is a lazy, playful loafer and has no evil intentions; but, like a shut-in boy or a boy with a task to perform, he wants company—does not know just what to do with himself.

The black bear has more human-like traits than any other animal I know. He is a boy in disguise—will not know long at anything unless at something to produce mischief. Occasionally he finds things dull and simply does not know what to do with himself. He is happy go lucky, and taking thought of the morrow is not one of his troubles. He is afraid of the grizzly and avoids man as though he were a pestilence.

He plans no harm. In other words, the black bear is just the opposite in character of what he had long been thought and is still almost universally believed to be. A million writers and spoken stories have it that he is ferocious—a wanton, cruel killer. He fights or works only when compelled to do so.

He is the most plausible bluffer I have ever seen. With hair bristling on the back, upper lip stuck forward and an onrush, with a rapid volley of champing k-w-o-o-f-f-s, he appears terrible. He pulls himself out of many a predicament and obtains many an unearned morsel in this way. Most of his bluffs are for amusement. He will go far out of his way for the purpose of running.

A black bear climbs a tree almost as readily as a cat, and he climbs a small pole or a large tree with equal ease. The grizzly does not climb trees, but the black bear, with its catlike forepaws, can simply race up a tree trunk. Much of his time, both asleep and awake, is spent in tree-tops. He might almost be called a perching animal.

Like most animals the black bear has a local habitation. His territory is twenty or less miles in circumference, and in this he is born, lives and dies. In springtime he descends to feed on the earliest wild gardens of the foothills.

The black bear eats everything that is edible. Though omnivorous, his food is mainly that of a vegetarian. He digs out rich willow and aspen roots in the shallow and soft places and tears up or digs out numerous plants for their roots or tubers. Often he eats grass and devours hundreds of juicy weeds. During autumn I have seen him on the edges of snow fields and glaciers consuming thousands of unfortunate grasshoppers, flies and other insects there accumulated. He is particularly fond of ants—tears ant hills and decaying logs to pieces and licks up the ants as they come storming forth to bite him. He tears hundreds of rotten logs and stumps to pieces for grubs, ants and their eggs.

He freely eats honey, the bees and their nests. He catches mice and often amuses himself and makes a most amusing and manlike spectacle by chasing and catching grasshoppers. He will devour carrion. In a fish country he searches for fish and occasionally catches live ones, but he is too restless or shiftless to be a good fisherman.

The black bear is or was found pretty well distributed over North America. His color and activities vary somewhat with the locality, this variation being due perhaps to a difference of climate and in the food supply.

The black bear has a well developed brain and may be classed among the alert animals of the wild. Its senses are amazingly developed. They seem to be ever on duty.

Young black bears have good tempers and are playful in captivity, but if teased or annoyed they become troublesome and even dangerous with age. If their enemy offend them present him with a black bear cub that has been mistreated. He is an intense, high strung animal and, if subjected to annoyances, teasing or occasional cruelty, becomes revengeful and vindictive. Sometimes he will even look for trouble and, once in a fight, has the tenacity of a bulldog.

The black bear has never been protected as a game animal. Through all the seasons of the year, with gun and dogs, the hunter is allowed to pursue him. It would be well for a few years to have a closed season on bears. As he is verging on extinction and as he gives to the wilds much of his spirit, there ought to be a closed season to protect this rollicking fellow of the forest.

If I were asked to select the one emblematic animal that best gives and suggests the spirit and the spell of the great outdoors I should select the black bear.—Enos A. Mills in Saturday Evening Post.

Discouragement in a Laugh. "Don't you always feel encouraged when people laugh?" asked the man at the club of another, who had the reputation of an after dinner speaker. "Well," was the reply, "I once proposed marriage to a girl, but it didn't encourage me when she merely laughed."—Yonkers Statesman.

A He always has a certain amount of weight with those who wish to believe it.—Rice.

Rev. J. J. McCaskill, St. John, N.B., has been appointed chaplain of the 73rd Royal Highlanders, Montreal.

Berlin, Ont., has been promised an armory.

BAGGING A HIPPO.

How It is Done and How the Flesh of the Animal Tastes.

There are two ways of bagging a hippopotamus, says a writer in the Wide World Magazine, and neither is justified unless the sportsman is sorely in want of food, for its meat is very poor indeed and wants a good deal of preparation to be palatable to any one except the starving. It has a taste I can only describe as fishy, something what beef would taste like after being wrapped up for a couple of days with a Scotch haddock of doubtful freshness.

The hippo may be shot in water. When mortally wounded he will sink and will not reappear on the surface for several hours, consequently a string lookout has to be kept for the carcass. If he is only slightly wounded he may charge, but more often he will flee and die in the reeds to serve as food for scavenger birds or crocodiles.

The other and more sporting way is to shoot him on land. This is, as a rule, only possible at night or late in the evening and early in the morning. It would not be wise to find oneself between the river and the wounded hippo, for he at once makes for the water by the shortest route, and he goes so fast that getting out of his way requires pretty speedy feet and great coolness of nerve.

FORCES OF NATURE.

Soft Their Touch, but Constant and Effective Their Work.

What adds to the wonder of the earth's crust is that the millstones that did the work and are still doing it are the gentle forces that career above our heads—the sunbeam, the cloud, the air, the frost. The rain's gentle fall, the air's velvet touch, the sun's noiseless rays, the frost's exquisite crystals, these combined are the agents that crush the rocks, pulverize the mountains and transform continents of sterile granite into a world of fertile soil.

It is as if baby fingers did the work of powder and dynamite. Give the clouds and the sunbeams time enough and the Alps and the Andes disappear before them or are transformed into plains where corn may grow and cattle graze.

The snow falls as lightly as down and lies almost as lightly, yet the crags tumble beneath it; compacted by gravity, out of it grew the tremendous ice sheet that ground off the mountain summits, that scooped out lakes and valleys and modeled our northern landscapes as the sculptor his clay image.—John Burroughs.

The Distinguished Guest.

Captain Raabe was a man whose name had weight in the French cavalry. He was a tall man, belonging to the middle aged trooper type. With military qualities of the highest kind, he had a singular bearing, a savage sort of misanthropy and a cynical tongue, which stood in the way of promotion. When he was in the Sixth lancers, on garrison duty at Commercy, one of his comrades brought his father to dine with him at the officers' mess, a man of humble position and unpretentiously dressed. Captain Raabe, considering that this guest had not been fitly received, gave expression to his opinion, saying that if the executioner of Commercy had come in evening dress he would have had a better reception. The officers demurring, he made no rejoinder, but shortly afterward came to mess with a guest whose dress was irreproachable. Every one lavished attentions on the unknown. When dinner was over Captain Raabe, raising his glass, proposed the health of "the executioner of Commercy."

Sir Isaac Newton.

The discovery of gravitation was the first of many great ideas that came to "the greatest original thinker of all time." Newton was also the pioneer in announcing the physical properties of light. His epitaph, translated from the Latin, on his monument in Westminster Abbey describes in a few words the greatest accomplishments of Newton. It reads:

"Here lies Isaac Newton, who by vigor of mind always supernatural first demonstrated the motions and figures of the planets, the paths of the comets and the tides of the ocean. He discovered what before his time no one had even suspected, that rays of light are differently refrangible and that this is the cause of colors."

An Eye For an Eye.

The law of Afghanistan is in theory the same as that of Mohammedan countries in general—that is, of the Koran. This is an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and enables the party wronged to avenge himself on a relative if circumstances prevent him from reaching the aggressor in person. Hence revenge becomes among the Afghans a point of honor, which a man may waive except with disgrace.

They Knew.

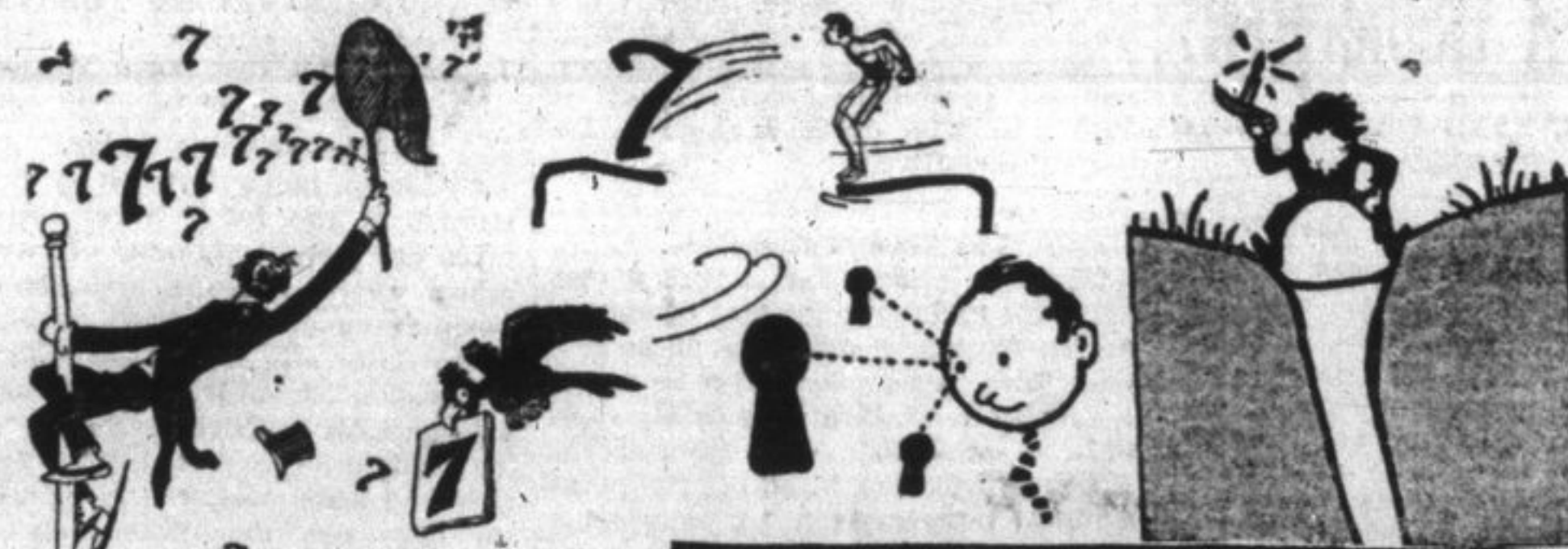
"Now, children," said the teacher, "I've explained to you the nature of a fixed holiday. Now, give me an instance of a movable holiday." And the class answered in chorus, "May the 1st."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Her Wavering Affections.

"Hubby, I'm in love with that hat." "You fall in love with too many hats. If you'll promise to remain constant to that one as much as six weeks I'll buy it for you."—Buffalo News.

There never was a man so strong but strong drink was stronger.—Detroit Free Press.

Chairman J. D. Flavell, of the Ontario License Commission, stated at Halleybury that if the military officers would limit the hours of sale of liquor the board would back them up.



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"That IS interesting. Now, what is Point 7?"

Point 7? That is in the gum. You will find it there. Later on we will offer suitable rewards for the discovery of Point 7. But now we simply present it to you this way: ⑦ What?

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