

Nearer came the sounds—nearer and clearer, until the gallant brute bounded out on the bank above me. There he halted, and flinging back his tossed mane, uttered a shrill neigh. He was bewildered, and looked upon every side, snorting loudly!

I knew that, having once seen me, he would not stop until he had pressed his nose against my cheek—for this was his usual custom. Holding out my hands, I again uttered the magic words.

Now looking downward he perceived me; and, stretching himself, sprang out into the channel. The next moment I held him by the bridle!

There was no time to be lost. I was still going down; and my armpits were fast nearing the surface of the quicksand.

I caught the lariat; and, passing it under the saddle-girths, fastened it in a tight, firm knot. I then looped the trailing end, making it secure around my body. I had left enough of the rope, between the bit-ring and the girths, to enable me to check and guide the animal—in case the drag upon my body should be too painful.

All this while the dumb brute seemed to comprehend what I was about. He knew, too, the nature of the ground on which he stood; for, during the operation, he kept lifting his feet alternately to prevent himself from sinking.

My arrangements were at length completed; and, with a feeling of terrible anxiety, I gave my horse the signal to move forward. Instead of going off with a start, the intelligent animal stepped away slowly, as though he understood my situation! The lariat tightened—I felt my body moving, and, the next moment, experienced a wild delight—a feeling I can not describe—as I found myself dragged out of the sand!

I sprang to my feet with a shout of joy. I rushed up to my steed; and, throwing my arms around his neck, kissed him with as much delight as I would have kissed a beautiful girl. He answered my embrace with a low whimper, that told me I was understood.

I looked for my rifle. Fortunately it had not sunk deeply, and I soon found it. My boots were behind me, but I staid not to look for them—being smitten with a wholesome dread of the place where I had left them.

I was not long in retreating from the arroyo; and, mounting, I galloped back to the trail.

It was sundown before I reached camp; where I was met by the inquiries of my wondering companions: "Did you come across the 'goats'?" "Where's your boots?" "Whether have you been hunting or fishing?"

I answered all these questions by relating my adventures; and, for that night, I was again the hero of the camp-fire.

### THE BEAR-STEAK.

A GASTRONOMIC ADVENTURE.

THE Englishman's predilection for a beef-steak is almost proverbial; but we fancy it would take some time to reconcile John Bull in general to a bear-steak, however much we might

expatiate to him on its excellence and the superiority of its flavor over that of his old-established favorite, however confidently we might assure him that the bear was a most delicate feeder, selecting the juiciest fruits of the forest and the most esculent roots of the earth for his ordinary nourishment. It might be supposed that this dislike to bear's flesh as an article of food arose from our national aversion to every thing that is outlandish; but the following gastronomic adventure, related in the pages of a modern French traveler, proves that our frog-eating neighbors find it just as difficult to surmount their aversion to feeding on the flesh of Master Bruin, as the most sturdy and thoroughbred Englishman among us.

M. Alexandre Dumas, after a long mountainous walk, arrived about four o'clock one fine autumn afternoon at the inn at Martigny. Exercise and the keen mountain air had combined to sharpen his appetite, and he inquired from the host, with some degree of eagerness, at what hour the *table-d'hôte* dinner was usually served.

"At half past five," replied the host.

"That will do very well," rejoined M. Dumas; "I shall then have time to visit the old castle before dinner."

Punctual to the appointed hour the traveler returned, but found to his dismay that every seat at the long table was already occupied. The host, however, who appeared to have taken M. Dumas, even at first sight, into his especial favor, approached him with a courteous smile, and, pointing to a small side-table carefully laid out, said: "Here, sir, this is your place. I had not enough of bear-steak left to supply the whole *table d'hôte* with it; and, besides, most of my guests have tasted this bear already, so I reserved my last steak for you: I was sure you would like it." So saying, the good-natured host placed in the centre of the table a fine, juicy-looking steak, smoking hot, and very tempting in appearance; but glad would the hungry traveler have been could he only have believed that it was a beef, and not a bear-steak, which now lay before him. Visions of the miserable-looking animals he had seen drowsily slumbering away existence in a menagerie, or covered with mud, and led about by a chain, for the amusement of the multitude, presented themselves to the traveler's eyes, and he would fain have turned away from the proffered treat. But he could not find it in his heart to be so ungracious as to express a dislike to food which the host evidently consoered as the choicest delicacy the country could afford. He accordingly took his seat at the table, and cut off a small slice of the steak; then screwing his courage to the sticking-point, and opening his mouth wide, as if about to demolish a bolus, he heroically gulped the dreaded morsel. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.* He had no sooner achieved this feat than he began to think that bear-flesh was, after all, not quite so bad a thing as he had expected. He swallowed a second morsel. "It was really the tenderest and most juicy steak he had ever tasted." "Are

you sure this is a bear-steak!" he inquired of the landlord.

"Yes, sir, I can assure you it is," replied the good-natured bustling man as he hurried off to attend upon his other guests at the *table-d'hôte*. Before he returned to M. Dumas at the side-table, three-quarters of the steak had disappeared; and, highly gratified at finding his favorite dish was so much approved of, he renewed the conversation by observing: "That was a famous beast, I can tell you; it weighed three hundred and twenty pounds."

"A fine fellow indeed he must have been," rejoined the traveler.

"It cost no small trouble to kill him."

"I can well believe that," rejoined M. Dumas, at the same time raising the last morsel to his mouth.

"He devoured half the huntsman who shot him!" added the loquacious landlord.

Hastily flinging aside the loathed morsel which he had just placed within his lips, the traveler indignantly exclaimed: "How dare you pass such jokes upon a man when he is in the middle of his dinner!"

"I can assure you, sir, I am not joking," replied the landlord: "I am only telling you the simple truth."

The traveler, whose appetite for further food of any description whatever was by this time effectually destroyed, rose from table, and with a look of horror, begged that the host would acquaint him with the particulars of the tragedy which had now acquired in his eyes so painful an interest. The good man, nothing loth to hear himself talk, yielded a ready acquiescence to this request, and continued his story as follows:

"You must know, sir, the man who killed this bear was a poor peasant belonging to the village of Foula, and named William Mona. This animal, of which there now only remains the small morsel you have left upon your plate, used to come every night and steal his pears, giving a special preference to the fruit of one fine pear-tree laden with bergamottes. Now it so happened that William Mona unfortunately also preferred the bergamottes to all other fruit. He at first imagined it was some of the children of the village who committed these depredations in his orchard, and having consequently loaded his gun with powder only, he placed himself in ambush that he might give them a good fright. Toward eleven o'clock at night he heard a distant growl. 'Ho, ho!' said he, 'there is a bear somewhere in the neighborhood.' Ten minutes afterward a second growl was heard; but this time it was so loud and so near at hand that he began to fear he should scarcely have time to reach a place of refuge, and threw himself flat upon the ground, in the earnest hope that the bear would be satisfied with taking his pears instead of devouring himself. A few moments of anxious suspense ensued, during which the bear, passing within ten paces of the terrified peasant, advanced in a straight line toward the pear-tree in question. He climbed it with the utmost agility, although its branches creaked beneath the weight of his

ponderous body; and having secured for himself a comfortable position, committed no small havoc among the luscious bergamottes. Having gorged himself to his heart's content, he slowly descended from the tree, and returned in tranquil dignity toward his mountain-home. All this had occupied about an hour, during which time had appeared to travel at a much slower pace with the man than it did with the bear.

"William Mona was, however, at heart a brave and resolute man, and he said to himself, as he watched his enemy's retiring steps: 'He may go home this time, if he pleases, but, Master Bruin, we shall meet again.' The next day one of his neighbors, who came to visit him, found him sawing up the teeth of a pitchfork, and transforming them into slugs.

"What are you about there?" he asked.

"I am amusing myself," replied William. The neighbor, taking up one of the pieces of iron, turned it over and over in his hand, like a man who understood such things, and then said quietly:

"If you were to own the truth, William, you would acknowledge that these little scraps of iron are destined to pierce a tougher skin than that of the chamois."

"Perhaps they may," replied William.

"You know that I am an honest fellow," resumed Francis (for so was the neighbor called): "well, if you choose, we will divide the bear between us; two men in such a case are better than one."

"That's as it may be," replied William, at the same time cutting his third slug.

"I'll tell you what," continued Francis, "I will leave you in full possession of the skin, and we will only share the flesh between us, together with the bounty offered by government for every bear that is killed, and which will give us forty francs apiece."

"I should prefer having the whole myself," replied William.

"But you can not prevent me from seeking the bear's track in the mountain, and placing myself in ambush on his passage."

"You are free to do that, if you please." So saying, William, who had now completed the manufacture of his slugs, began to measure out a charge of powder double in amount to that usually placed in a carabine.

"I see you intend to use your musket!" said Francis.

"Yes, of course I do; three iron slugs will do their work more surely than a leaden bullet."

"They will spoil the skin."

"Never mind that, if they do their work more effectually."

"And when do you intend to commence your chase?"

"I will tell you that to-morrow."

"Once more, then—are you quite determined not to let me share the chance with you?"

"Yes, I prefer managing the whole matter myself, and sharing neither the danger nor the profit—*chacun pour soi*."

"Farewell, then, neighbor—I wish you success."

"In the evening, as Francis was passing Mona's dwelling, he saw the huntsman quietly seated on the bench before his door, engaged in smoking his pipe. He once more approached him and said:

"See, I bear you no ill-will—I have discovered the bear's track, therefore I might lie in wait for him and shoot him, if I pleased, without your help; but I have come once more to you, to propose that we should attack him together."

"Each one for himself," replied William, as before.

"Francis knew nothing of Mona's proceedings during the remainder of that evening, except that his wife saw him take up his musket about half-past ten o'clock, roll up a bag of gray sack-cloth, place it under his arm, and leave the house. She did not venture to ask him what he was about; for Mona, in such cases, was apt to tell her to hold her tongue, and not trouble herself about matters which did not concern her.

"Francis had really in the mean time tracked the bear, as he had said he would. He had followed its traces as far as the border of William's orchard, and, not liking to trespass upon his neighbor's territory, he then took up his post on the borders of the pine-wood which lay on the slope of the hill overhanging Mona's garden.

"As it was a clear night, he could observe with ease from this spot all that was going on below. He saw the huntsman leave his house, and advance toward a gray rock, which had rolled down from the adjoining heights into the centre of his little inclosure, and now stood at the distance of about twenty paces from his favorite pear-tree. There Mona paused, looked round as if to ascertain that he was quite alone, unrolled his sack, and slipped into it, only allowing his head and his two arms to emerge above the opening. Having thus in a great measure concealed his person, he leaned back against the rock, and remained so perfectly still that even his neighbor, although he knew him to be there, could not distinguish him from the lifeless stone. A quarter of an hour thus elapsed in patient expectation. At last a distant growl was heard, and in less than five minutes afterward the bear appeared in sight. But whether by accident, or whether it were that he had scented the second huntsman, he did not on this occasion follow his usual track, but diverging toward the right, escaped falling into the ambush which Francis had prepared for him.

"William, in the meantime, did not stir an inch. It might have been imagined that he did not even see the savage animal for which he was lying in wait, and which seemed to brave him by passing so closely within the reach of his gun. The bear, on his side, appeared quite unconscious of an enemy's presence, and advanced with rapid strides toward the tree. But at the moment when he rose upon his hind legs, in order to clasp the trunk with his fore-paws, thus leaving his breast exposed, and no longer protected by

his broad and massive shoulders, a bright flash of light illuminated the face of the rock, and the whole valley re-echoed with the report of the doubly-loaded gun, together with the loud howl which proceeded from the wounded animal. The bear fled from the fatal spot, passing once more within ten paces of William without perceiving him. The latter had now taken the additional precaution of drawing the sack over his head, and rested motionless as before against the face of the rock.

"Francis, with his musket in his hand, stood beneath the shelter of the wood, a silent and breathless spectator of the scene. He is a bold huntsman, but he owned to me that he fairly wished himself at home when he saw the enormous animal, furious from its wound, bearing straight down upon the spot where he stood. He made the sign of the cross (for our hunters, sir, are pious men), commended his soul to God, and looked to see that his gun was well loaded. Already was the bear within a few paces of the pine-wood; in two minutes more a deadly encounter must take place, in which Francis was well aware that either he or the bear must fall, when suddenly the wounded animal paused, raised his nostrils in the air, as if catching some scent which was borne by the breeze, and then uttering one furious growl, he turned hastily round, and rushed back toward the orchard.

"Take care of yourself, William—take care!" exclaimed Francis, at the same time darting forward in pursuit of the bear, and forgetting every thing else in his anxiety to save his old comrade from the terrible danger which threatened him; for he knew well that if William had not had time to reload his gun, it was all over with him—the bear had evidently scented him. But suddenly a fearful cry—a cry of human terror and human agony—rent the air: it seemed as though he who uttered it had concentrated every energy in that one wild, despairing cry—an appeal to God and man—"Help! oh, help, help!" A dead silence ensued: not even a single moan was heard to succeed that cry of anguish. Francis flew down the slope with redoubled speed, and as he approached the rock, he began yet more clearly to distinguish the huge animal, which had hitherto been half-concealed beneath its shade, and perceived that the bear was trampling under foot, and rending to pieces, the prostrate form of his unfortunate assailant.

"Francis was now close at hand; but the bear, still intent upon his prey, did not even seem aware of his presence. He did not venture to fire, for terror and dismay had unnerved his arm, and he feared that he might miss his aim, and perhaps shoot his unhappy friend, if indeed he yet continued to breathe. He took up a stone and threw it at the bear. The infuriated animal turned immediately upon this new and unexpected foe, and raising himself upon his hind legs, prepared to give him that formidable hug, which the experienced huntsman well knew would prove a *last embrace*. Paralyzed with fear, his presence of mind had well-nigh deserted

him, when all of a sudden he became conscious that the animal was pressing the point of his gun with its shaggy breast. Mechanically almost he placed his finger upon the lock, and pulled the trigger. The bear fell backward—the ball had this time done its work effectually. It had pierced through his breast, and shattered the spinal bone. The huntsman, leaving the expiring animal upon the ground, now hastened to his comrade's side. But, alas! it was too late for human assistance to be of any avail. The unfortunate man was so completely mutilated, that it would have been impossible even to recognize his form. With a sickening heart, Francis hastened to call for help; for he could perceive by the lights which were glancing in the cottage-windows that the unworked noise had roused many of the villagers from their slumbers.

"Before many moments had elapsed, almost all the inhabitants of the village were assembled in poor Mona's orchard, and his wife among the rest. I need not describe the dismal scene. A collection was made for the poor widow through the whole valley of the Rhone, and a sum of seven hundred francs was thus raised. Francis insisted upon her receiving the government bounty, and sold the flesh and the skin of the bear for her benefit. In short, all her neighbors united to assist her to the utmost of their power. We innkeepers also agreed to open a subscription-list at our respective houses, in case any travelers should wish to contribute a trifle; and in case you, sir, should be disposed to put down your name for a small sum, I should take it as a great favor."

"Most assuredly," replied M. Dumas, as he rose from the table, and cast a parting glance of horror at the last morsel of the bear-steak, inwardly vowing never again to make experiments in gastronomy.

#### WEOVIL BISCUIT MANUFACTORY.

AT Weovil, in the south of England, are produced biscuits for the royal navy. There the motive power is a large steam-engine, whose agency is visible in all parts of the establishment. The services of this engine commence with the arrival of a cargo of wheat under the walls of the building; and we should have a very imperfect notion of the ingenuity displayed in the establishment if we did not examine some of the earlier processes. Let us, then, begin with the beginning; and having observed that the wheat is lifted by a steam-worked crane from the lighter to the uppermost floor, let us descend to the floor below, and examine the first process to which it is submitted—that of cleaning. The grain supplied from above flows in a continual stream into one end of a cylinder of fine wire-work, about two feet in diameter and ten in length which revolves steadily in a horizontal position. A spiral plate runs through the interior of this cylinder, dividing it into several sections, and thus forming a sort of Archimedean screw. The revolutions of this cylinder carry the grain onward through its whole length, so that in the

passage any particles of dirt that may have been mixed with it fall through the interstices of the wirework. The effectual character of this operation is exemplified by the quantities of dirt deposited from wheat which to all appearance was clean before entering the cylinder; the grain thus thoroughly cleansed, descends another stage to the grinding-room (for the wheat is ground on the premises), where ten pairs of millstones are worked by the same steam-power. There is nothing peculiar in the process of grinding; but the manner in which the flour is afterward collected deserves notice. As it flows from the several stones, it is led into horizontal troughs, along which it is propelled by the action of perpetual screws working in each trough. The contents of all the troughs are brought to one point, whence, by means of a succession of plates or buckets revolving round a wheel, on the principle of a chain-pump or dredging-machine, the flour is lifted to the story above, where it is cooled, sifted, and put into sacks, for removal to the bakehouse. It is not long since we observed in a newspaper the announcement of an invention for collecting and saving the impalpable powder, which flies off in the process of grinding corn, and which, containing the purest portions of the flour, has hitherto been wasted. This saving has not yet been effected at Weovil, as our whitened appearance on leaving the mill-room sufficiently testified; but doubtless, the zeal and ingenuity that has introduced the improvements we are describing will not stop short while any thing remains to be done.

We now arrive at the bakehouse, the principal theatre of Mr. Grant's ingenuity. We are in a large room on the ground floor—it may be one hundred and twenty feet in length, lofty, and well lighted, the centre portions of which are occupied by machinery of no very complex aspect; and it may be a dozen men and boys slipshod and bare-armed, are moving here and there among it. There is no bustle, no confusion; and notwithstanding the unceasing movements of the machinery, very little noise. We are at once sensible that we are witnessing a scene of well-organized industry; but we can hardly persuade ourselves that we see the whole staff employed in converting flour into biscuit at the rate of one hundred sacks per day. In the midst of the general activity, the eye is caught by the figure of one man whose attitude of repose contrasts strangely with the movements going on all round him. He seems to have nothing to do but to lean listlessly with one or both of his elbows on the top of a sort of box or chest, much resembling an ordinary stable corn-bin, which stands against the wall at the left of the entrance; yet that occupation will not account for the measly state of his bare arms; let us look into the bin, and see if we can discover any thing. The bottom of it is filled with water, just above the surface of which, extending from end to end, we see a circular shaft, armed with iron blades, crossing it at intervals of two inches apart, and protruding six inches or more on each side of