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THE KING OF BEASTS.

He is Merely a Big Cat. After All, and a Coward at Heart.

If we testify heretofore for fact and go by the testimony of travelers and hunters, it is very doubtful whether the lion deserves his magnificent reputation. It is his appearance, no doubt, which has gained for him the appellation of "king of beasts," with all the regal honor pertaining to it. Certainly he looks "every inch a king." Nothing can be finer. The fancy itself could conceive nothing more fittingly representative of majesty than the full grown male lion, gazing with great yellow eyes, which seem to know no fear, and the ample horns of his shaggy mane wrapped round his massive front and forearms. He looks like the embodiment by nature of lordliness and magnanimity, and he has been adopted as such in all literature and poetry from Homer and Eschylus down to the "lion comique" of our music halls. Yet he is only a cat—a great cat—after all, and those who know him in his native wilds give a very different character of "felis leo" from popular conceptions.

We do not wish to calumniate a creature so intimately connected with British story and so dignified in bearing and behavior, for nobody can deny that the lion is a great gentleman in his manners. Nevertheless, African sportsmen relate that he can show himself as cowardly as he is cruel; that he will abandon his consort and cubs in a moment of extreme danger, and that he scarcely ever charges straight home upon anybody who, armed or unarmed, has the presence of mind to await his onset. He is described as very nervous and very cunning, and dreading beyond everything the superior prowess of the white man.

The early Dutch settlers at the cape, speaking of lions prowling round the fort at night "in such numbers as though they would take it by storm." Now one must go very far into the African "veldt" to see a lion, and a strange fact is that he has learned the craft of silence and is seldom or never heard to lift up his mighty voice except in the far wilderness, where the hunters have not come except singly. Thus it is written in an African guidebook: "Though his footprints may frequently be seen near the mountains of Lokorone and Boatlanama, and he will sometimes venture to carry away an ox from a wagon span thereabouts, he rarely or never makes his presence known by his roar, having learned apparently that it will only have the effect of frightening off the few timid antelopes upon which all hopes of replenishing his larder depend, or, worse still, of betraying his position to his inveterate enemy and persecutor, man."—London Telegraph.

It Was All Love.

A writer for the Boston Transcript was the witness the other day of a very pretty scene on a street car. There was an old negro woman—a very black old woman—whose face, besides being black, was pockmarked. No doubt a superficial observer would have called her repulsive, but there was a sweet and kindly look in her eyes and a benevolent expression about her black features which, as you looked at her, gave you a glimpse of something beautiful.

At her side, with his sweet child face toward the window, knelt a little white boy—a handsomely dressed little chap with blond curls and blue eyes. He asked the old black woman questions now and then, which she answered with a deep, grave, kind voice, and she called the little fellow "honey."

Presently this little Caucasian leaned over tenderly toward the old woman, put his arm lovingly around her neck and laid his pink and white cheek against her black face. That obliterated every bit of repulsiveness the woman might have had with every person of sentiment in that car. To this little boy the old black face was entirely beautiful, because it was all love. The beauty that he saw was a good deal more than skin deep.

The Ring Pheasant.

This bird was imported from China by O. N. Denny some eight years ago. Six pair were let loose on Petterson butte, about four miles from Solaville, Or., and the climatic conditions and country being favorable and being protected by a strict law for six years they have multiplied rapidly and now are one of our most common game birds. In fact, they multiplied so rapidly that long before the six years' protection had ceased the farmers complained bitterly that the birds were a serious damage to their grain and gardens, and many birds were killed, but in this I think they were mistaken, for in my examination of many stomachs at all seasons of the year I found but very little grain as their food, but many wild seeds, bugs, grasshoppers, etc.

I think that the farmers have realized this also to some extent, as nearly all have now posted trespass notices for their protection.—Science.

It Went Unpunished.

This story is told of the late Dr. Holland, better known as "Timothy Titcomb." During the service of one of the large churches in Springfield, Mass., a heavy electric storm came up, and one of the gentlemen of the choir set out to secure an omnibus to take the ladies home. Among the fair singers was a certain Miss Etta S.—, and as Dr. Holland was gallantly helping her into the vehicle a terrific clap of thunder startled them, upon which he remarked, "Etta in terra pax hominibus." To close this strange tale, it may be well to add that the doctor was not immediately struck by lightning, but died years afterward peacefully in his bed.—San Francisco Argonaut.

To Kill a Lobster.

When a live lobster is required for boiling or other purposes, here is a simple and comparatively painless mode of killing it: Run a long, narrow bladed knife into the tail at the third joint from the end, having the blade slant downward. This will cut the spinal cord, and death will quickly follow.

THERE WAS GOOD FISHING.

Likewise Good Luck on a Phenomenally Good Imagination.

The scene of the following incident was about 40 miles from Gloversville, N. Y., on a beautiful little lake just across the tableland at Pisco lake, in Hamilton county. The day was all that a fisherman could desire, and every condition was right for good fishing. A party of three were in the boat—namely, L. E. Everest, his friend, Professor Spencer from Brooklyn, and the writer.

They had taken nearly 50 pickerel in less than half a day, and the size was good, weighing from 2 1/2 to 6 pounds. The last turn around the "lucky point" was being made before we started for home. Everest, who was trolling one of the lines, said: "I've got another. He's a big one from the way he pulls." Everest let him play at one time nearly 800 feet of line before the fish could be turned. When he had been brought into sight, he was not so large as some we had already in the boat, but there was an unusual motion all about him. Soon the line was drawn so tightly it was necessary to let him play again. When brought back, it was discovered that a large pickerel had attempted to swallow the one on the hook, which was now quite exhausted.

The big fellow still followed, shark-like, for the dead body of his victim, which, however, we were not disposed to give up. Just as Everest was about to swing the fish on his hook into the boat the professor took up his oar, hoping to strike and thus capture the large one. The movement of the oar attracted the attention of the fish, and in a twinkling he made a pass at it. The blade was about 7 inches wide, but his jaws grated across the upper and lower edges, sawing a groove on either side with his sharp teeth. The professor, by carrying his oar forward with the movement of the fish, at the same time raising it from the water, landed the huge fellow into the boat.

He weighed 13 1/2 pounds. The fish on the hook only weighed three pounds, but showed signs of battle, being bitten in several places. Upon opening him we found, as is often the case, a fish of smaller size in his stomach. This one showed signs of life and was opened. We then discovered a pretty little gold chatelaine watch and were surprised that the time agreed with our watches and that it was running.

More than pleased with our fishing expedition, we returned to the Adirondack hotel and informed Landlord George A. McCoy of our good luck, at the same time showing the watch. In less than two minutes all the guests about the house were in the office, and among the number was a pretty young lady from Albany, who said that the watch was a token of friendship which she had prized very highly. When on the lake in the early part of the day, it had fallen into the water, and, she supposed, was lost. It is needless to say she was overjoyed at its recovery.—Albany Journal.

Do Swans Sing Before They Die?

The story that tells of swans singing before death is very old, and of course is founded upon fancy. The idea has been brought down from ancient myths. The voice of the swan is extremely harsh and disagreeable, without a single musical note in it, and no good reason can be found for likening some of the world's sweetest poets to this unmelodious voiced fowl.

The only approach to a verification we have ever seen is the following, clipped some years ago from a Virginia newspaper:

"A sporting friend, recently returned from a foray upon the Potomac river, below Mount Vernon, was the guest of a venerable and highly intelligent lady, who has always lived on the Potomac. Speaking of the swan, she gave it as her decided opinion that this bird was in the habit of singing or making a plaintive noise when dying. The reason she gave for entertaining this belief was that on very many occasions in the last 50 years she had been awakened at night by a sweet and exceedingly sad noise, something like the tones of a flageolet coming over the water, and that on every subsequent morning a dead swan was found to be floating on the water or to have been washed ashore."—Pittsburg Dispatch.

The Bang Called In.

One of the most noticeable changes in fashion this season is that which affects the dressing of the hair. The "fringe" has been gradually giving place to softly waved bandeaux, and the bandeaux are creeping gradually lower down until the return seems imminent to the puffed and waved bandeaux to be seen in the portraits of Jennie Lind taken along in the fifties. To young and delicate faces the style has an agreeable piquancy and quaintness, but to women past their first youth or with strong, coarse features the bang has a softening effect much to be desired.

Another style now gaining favor and one becoming to round faces with low foreheads is that of turning the hair back from the forehead loosely in a twist that is lost in the light coils and puffs arranged in the middle of the forehead. In this style of coiffure the front hair is parted off on either side and twisted in the old fashioned way into two rolls.—New York Sun.

The Deluge.

In answer to a correspondent a newspaper says: "The deluge mentioned in the Bible was threatened in the year 1756 B. C., and began on Dec. 7, 1656 B. C., and continued 877 days. The ark rested on Mount Ararat on May 6, 1655, but Noah did not leave it until Dec. 18 following." Any reader who imagines that it would be an easy task to figure these details from a Biblical account can find a basis for his calculations in the seventh and eighth chapters of Genesis.

May Acquire Them.

"Brilliant and impulsive people," declares a lecturer on physiognomy, "have black eyes, or if they don't have them they're apt to get them if they're too impulsive."—London Tit-Bits.

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