

AMERICAN STORY OF A BEAR.—It is very seldom that a bear is met with in the woods, for his activity is chiefly nocturnal; but a highly curious *rencontre* is said to have taken place one day in a part of the forest not very remote from this place, which I will give you, as illustrative of the manners, both human and ursine, of these parts. A planter had ridden out into the wood to look after some strayed cattle, carrying with him the redoubtable cow-whip, consisting of a handle three feet long, and a lash of twisted raw hide thirty feet long, which was coiled on his right arm. Suddenly a huge bear starts up before him, from behind the gnarled roots of an old tree. The man could not resist the impulse to give the animal a lash with his whip, but, to his surprise, the bear showed a disposition to fight. It was rather an awkward predicament; but the horse was intelligent and agile, and as the rider made him face the bear, he was able, by leaping nimbly to and fro, to evade the ferocious brute, stung to madness by the repeated blows of the terrific cow-whip. At length the bear acknowledged his master, and turned tail for flight; when a thought struck the planter that he might possibly drive him home, as he would a refractory bullock. He accordingly kept close behind the animal, driving him along one of the numerous cattle-paths that thrid the forests, admonishing him, by a severe cut with the whip whenever he attempted to leave the track, until at length the poor creature patiently went as he was driven. A distance of six miles was thus traversed by pursuer and pursued, till the planter came within hail of his own house, when his son came out with a rifle and shot the poor persecuted bear.

Letters from Alabama.

THE ORIGIN OF CIGARS.—The cigar, though more delicately manufactured, is essentially the same as smoked by the red man when first visited by Columbus. We may here describe an Indian mode of tobacco-taking, not yet given in this volume, but which is evidently the origin of the cigar. It is told by Lionel Wafer, in his account of his "Travels in the Isthmus of Darien in 1699." He says that when the tobacco leaves are properly dried and cured, the natives "laying two or three leaves upon one another, they roll up all altogether sideways into a long roll, yet leaving a little hollow. Round this they roll other leaves one after another, in the same manner, but close and hard, till the roll is as big as one's wrist, and two or three feet in length. Their way of smoking when they are in company together is thus: A boy lights one end of a

roll, and burns it to a coal, wetting the part next it to keep it from wasting too fast. The end so lighted he puts into his mouth, and blows the smoke through the whole length of the roll into the face of every one of the company or council, though there be two or three hundred of them. Then they, sitting in their usual posture upon forms, make with their hands held together, a kind of funnel round their mouths and noses; into this they receive the smoke as it is blown upon them, snuffing it up greedily and strongly, as long as ever they are able to hold their breath, and seeming to bless themselves, as it were, with the refreshment it gives them." Lieutenant Page, who commanded the American expedition to La Plata, speaks of the universal custom of smoking in Paraguay, and inviting visitors to join. The servants, as a matter of routine, bring in a "small brass vessel, containing a few coals of fire, and a plate of cigars. This last hospitality is offered in every house, however humble its pretensions in other respects; and all men, women, and children, delicate refined girls, and young masters who would not with us be promoted to the dignity of pantaloonsmoke with a gravity and *gusto* that is irresistibly ludicrous to a foreigner. My son sometimes accompanied me in these visits, and was always greatly embarrassed by the pressing offer of cigars. I made his excuse by saying, 'Smoking is a practice we consider injurious to children.' 'Si, Senor,' the Paraguayan would reply, "with all other tobacco, but not with that of Paraguay." With both sexes tobacco is a constant passion."—*Tobacco; its History and Associations.*

REMOVING MILDEW FROM CLOTHES.—When clothes are rolled up in a damp state for a few days, they become spotted with mildew, consisting of minute *fungi*. These are very difficult to remove, and they injure both the texture and color of the clothes. The only effectual method known to us for removing such spots from linen is by steeping the latter in a weak liquor of chloride of lime. It is made by obtaining some chloride of lime from the druggist's (say one pound,) then stirring it into about four gallons of cold water. It is now allowed to settle for one hour and the clear liquor is ready for the clothes, which should be steeped in it for about two hours, then washed thoroughly in cold water, and exposed on the grass to the sun.

We have had several inquiries regarding the best method of removing mildew from clothes, and some perhaps of our lady