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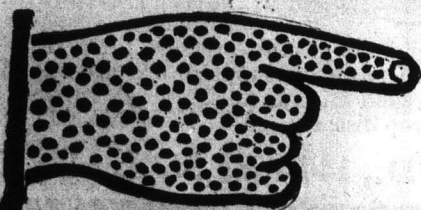
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MENTION
THIS PAPER

DOMINION PREMIUM CO.,
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Among the Savage Black Bears.

By Bonnycastle Dale.



WE were asked by a young Englishman, "Are all these bear stories true one hears?" Read the following notes from an expedition we made across the Straits of Juan de Fuca into the Olympic Peninsula and judge for yourself.

We had engaged the Terra Nova—Fritz, my assistant, always called her the Turn-Over—but she never did quite. She is the only hull in my recollection

we cared to figure on. I think both the Gordon settlers shared that belief, as good sea dogs though they were, they both had been violently sick.

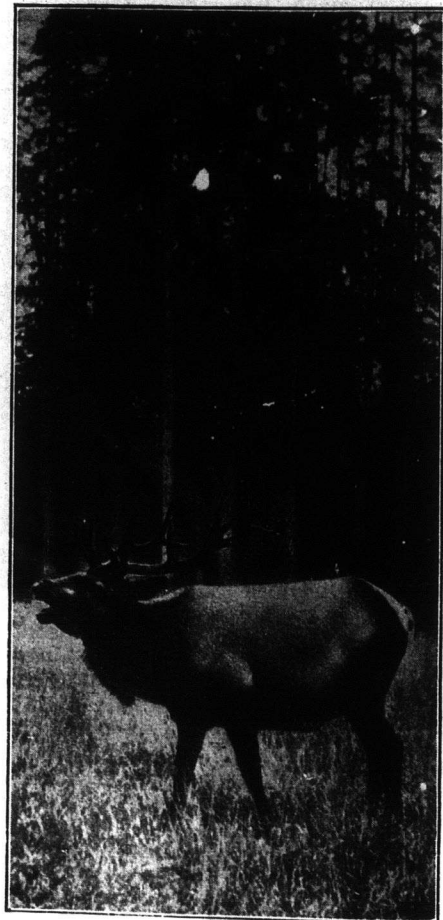
Well, we "pop, pop, popped" into a little cove, a tide-cleaned pebbly beach lay before us, a good holding ground for our anchors was beneath, and ahead lay a country of mighty firs, huge cedars, ten foot-ferns, and seemingly unpenetrable undergrowth. A country filled with berry bushes on the slopes of the lightly timbered sides of the slopes; truly, a very suitable home for the savage, black bears; only they were quite brown by now, as one that ran away from the shore as we landed showed.

There we saw two Clablam Indians eating a highly odorous meal on the beach. They were greedily sucking the contents of the raw "sea urchins" sea eggs they call them. Another dainty was the grisly tentacles of the big squid, called the "Devil Fish" by nature fakirs. Yet another, and this smelt beyond all words of descriptive power, was rancid whale oil. So powerful was this last dainty the offensive odour of it arose from the drops spilled on the pebbles for several days after.

We ate our lunch well to windward of this highly smelling couple. Our meal was enlivened by one occurrence that was very novel. A pair of blackfish, called by the Indians "Orea," or whale killer, or "Killersa," and by the deep sea sailors as "thrashers," inasmuch as they thrash about and seem to attack the whales, although in my six years' work off this coast I have never seen them attack, came plunging into our sheltered bay. Probably they had never seen a floating hull like the black bottom of the Turn-over—I beg pardon—the Terra Nova; at all events they rose near the gasoline craft, making her roll a bit. Then we saw the vaporous exhaust from their lungs as they exhaled. It rose like a column of steam from the blowholes. This is the operation that fools many a man. "There she blows," "a column of water arose in the air," and such-like expressions are used to describe what is only a condensing rush of hot air from the great mammal's lungs. These two big black fish, with yellow spotted bellies, circled the little craft. They looked fully as long as she was, but I do not think they exceeded thirty feet

Coast Indians totem animal, the Common Black Bear.

that could roll and dip and leap at the same time; but she could. In fact, she seemed to do it from choice. She was thirty-five feet over all and a battering ram for effectiveness in a heavy sea. Fritz mortally offended the big Swede that owned her when he said, "Oh! what a grand churn she would make." There was a reason for all this pitching and tossing that our Eastern readers are not familiar with. We were running down the Straits, on our left hand rose the snow-capped Olympics, on our right, some twelve miles off, the green slopes and red tops of the backbone of Vancouver Island made a glorious picture. The tide was ebbing and the wind sou'-west right on our bow; this condition—the wind against the tide—kicks up a heavy sea, but to add to our discomfort the "tide-rips" were unusually strong. These lean, hungry waves, boiling as if in a pot, were full of backfalls; water dashing in all directions, so that it was not unusual for us to ship a clean green sea over the sharp bow and also catch the leaping and "rip" over the stern. We had a nice open cockpit to catch all the water in, so Fritz and I incessantly bailed. We made bad weather of it after we passed Fort Crescent. Ahead, a dozen miles or so lay our destination, Pillar Point. The shore rose precipitously, no shelter was to be had short of our objective point. The Swede feared his engine would be drowned. Just as we were about to try to turn tail and run before the wind the force of the ebb slackened, the "tide-rips" ceased, and the wind seemed to be falling. Within an hour, so changeable are these mountain sheltered Straits, so fluctuating are the currents of air bred in the long, high valleys by the morning sun, suckling up the mists and heated air, causing the cold currents from off the ocean to rush in and thus breed the "western trades," we were "pop, pop, popping" over a calm stretch and the irrepressible Fritz was asking the Swede if it was time to take the butter out. No, but it was time to finish bailing and empty duffle bags and get things dried out; truly, we had been nearer the "end of the trails" than



Vancouver Island Elk.