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OUR BEAUTIFUL FURS, AND WHERE THEY COME FROM.

PART II. THE COMMON RACCOON.



Of all the fur-giving animals, perhaps the raccoon is the most widely known. The raccoon is exclusively an American animal, and as it is one of the most valuable fur-bearing animals, it is much hunted in consequence. Raccoon skins were formerly used as a recognised circulating medium in the States of Mississippi, and fetched about twenty or twenty-one cents apiece; it takes two of these animals to make a muff, and nine or ten to a boa; it is unfortunate in one sense that these valuable fur-giving creatures should be so small; but on the other hand, had they been larger and not so prolific, the chances are they would have long ago been exterminated. Raccoon is a lovely fur for winter, and many people prefer it, as I do, to any other, and it is not so expensive.

Genus Calobus (the ursine calob).—Now you all know the long hair muffs still in vogue with black hair trimmings; all these come from the calobus, a thumbless monkey. The fur is also in much request with the natives of Africa,

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who use this particular fur as a skirt, and other decorations. I suppose one monkey would make a good muff, but that, of course, depends upon the size of the monkey. Calob is the generic term of this group comprising three species, calob in Greek meaning maimed or deformed, because they are all three without thumbs.

The Mink.—The subject of our valuable furs is of so much interest that we illustrate a few more of those interesting little creatures that go so far to supply us with such comfort and give value to our dress. Such furs, many of them, must of necessity be costly, as I mentioned before, the animals themselves being so small, considerable havoc is made among them to supply the constant demand. One of many interesting little animals,



GUERZA MONKEY.



THE MINK.

the mink, is now as valuable as ever, although at one time it was not considered so, but certainly of late it has been in urgent request, and its numbers considerably reduced. The length of the mink from snout to root of tail is fifteen to eighteen inches. I believe in the early sixties as much as four dollars was given for a skin, and as many as five or six thousand of these skins were annually exported; and from America in about 1888, as many as three hundred and seventy thousand. The Russian mink skin from all accounts is not so valuable as the American by some shillings. The little animal is aquatic, as can be seen; wherever there are webbed feet rest assured the animal, or bird, is a half land and water being.

The mink is much used for muffs, carriage rugs and gentlemen's overcoats, ladies' capes, and Idalia and Stuart collarettes.

Chinchilla.—A truly lovely little animal this; it very much resembles a little mouse, only it uses its little hind legs like a kangaroo. I suppose there is not one of my readers who has not