

THE PROFESSOR'S PERILOUS

BEAR TRAPPING.

By C. C. Farr.

[Continued from August Number.]

About a week later all the good people were gathered together in church. Harry was the principal bass singer, and was at the moment rolling out his melodious bass notes when the door opened, and there appeared an excited face—also an arm wildly beckoning. Harry was a church warden, and obeyed the summons, somewhat indignant at the disturbance, especially seeing that it came while he was singing.

"What is the matter?" he asked of Jim Archer, for it was he.

"Haven't you set a bear trap?" asked Jim.

"Yes!" answered Harry, excitedly.

"In the creek about three miles away?"

"Yes, man; is there a bear in it?"

"You bet there is; you have her sure and sartin. I heard her a hollerin' like blue blazes as I passed, and I've come for to let you know."

Others had instinctively caught on to the fact that there was something unusual happening, so that by this time quite a little crowd had collected outside the church. Of course, they all volunteered to accompany Harry, preferring the excitement of taking a bear out of a trap to staying in church.

The party set forth at once, Harry proudly leading the way. It is not every man that can catch a bear, and Harry was the personification of this idea, as he walked along. It was only a very privileged individual that would be audacious enough to walk even with him on the road—the bulk of them followed meekly in the wake of the conquering hero. As they neared the spot the sounds made by the beast became distinctly audible, and every man who carried a gun looked to see that he was prepared for an emergency. Those who did not carry a gun instinctively dropped still further to the rear.

"Now," said Harry, authoritatively, "let no man shoot until I give the word. This is my bear, and I have the right to shoot first."

Everyone acquiesced in subdued murmurs, and they crept along closer and closer.

"My!" whispered Jim Archer, "how she do howl more like a human being than a brute beast."

"Hush!" said Harry, imperiously; "no talking."

Jim looked abashed and said nothing more.

At that they came so close that nothing intervened between them and the bear but a clump of willows.

"Now, boys," whispered Harry, "are you ready with your guns? Only remember, 'I shoot first!'"

"Listen," said Jim; "the bear is a talkin' sure enough."

And sure enough it was talking, for a voice rose in a wall from behind the willows saying:—



White Creek.

COQUITLAM.

By T. R. E. McINNES.

I US'D to steal away in hot July
At early dawn—thro' dell and over hill—
To hear at last Coquitlam's purling rill,
To whip the rippling stream with mimic fly,
And tempt the gamey trout—alert and shy.
I'd munch a bit of chocolate, to still
My hunger as the day grew long, until
The sun was shining low upon the sky;
Then, proudly with the fish that I had caught,
Go trudging homeward many a weary mile,
But thinking of a mother's welcome smile,
And how she'd choose the best that I had brought,
And bid me tell her all about it, while
She cook'd me up a supper smoking hot.

Victoria, B. C.

"Ah! Great Caesar's ghost! Why was I such an ass?"

Every one knew the voice, and by a common impulse there was a rush made towards it. The professor was caught in his own bear trap. With infinite care they extricated the poor man, Jim Archer taking the lead, while, so much had the mighty fallen, that Harry stayed quiet and silent in the background. It was a new order of things. The new had superseded the old, the first had become last, and 'he last first.

Luckily, it had been raining, and the professor had donned his long-legged boots in order to take a look at his trap, so that they had protected his leg. The teeth, of which he was so proud, had penetrated into his flesh, but beyond being stiff and sore, no material damage had been done.

Home they brought this warrior, not dead, but alive, and the professor swore that after this experience he would have no hand in trapping any animal. He knew now what they suffered, and he was determined to make no creature suffer as he had done. He would shoot them as men are shot, but he would never put a poor creature to the torture of the trap. He averred that the bear had passed him whilst thus caught, and that it had fairly laughed at him in its glee at seeing the bitter bit. No one believed this, however, for the professor had made noise enough to frighten away an army of bears.

It was many days before the professor and Harry heard the last of this adventure, and to this day the subject of bear-trapping is distasteful and distressing to both of them.

[THE END.]