

Mingo not being heard coming, owing to the dogs having entangled themselves in the leash, I now thought a fair chance offered of giving the bear another shot while he lay on the ground, and accordingly drew up my gun with a steady arm, and pulled the trigger—but it did not go off, and I then bethought myself that I had neglected to load it, in the height of my excitement. I therefore dropped the breach on my foot, and turning up my flask, let a usual charge of powder run into the barrel, as I supposed; then I drove two bullets tightly home with a strong hand, and levelling upon the dark object, fired at once. The report was astounding, but the heavy barrel did not spring; and Master Bruin was again aroused, and hugging himself with greater energy than before, just as Mingo came rushing forward with the two dogs, urging them on with a scream. I could have leaped from the top of the stump in the intensity of my zeal, had not Cribb, with a choking yelp, and a few short leaps, at once closed with the bear. There was an uncommon panting for a moment, and a shutting of teeth, offering an unerring indication that the fur was being scattered in that quarter, could one have had daylight to perceive it. Scamp now got emboldened, and made a pounce at the enemy's rear, making an important diversion in behalf of his comrade. Cribb bore himself bravely, standing on his hinder legs to be even with his enemy; but the bear gave him too much of it, with his sharp nails, and the desperate strength of his fore arm. He was about being taken into the bear's embrace, and then you would probably have heard of his ribs having been broken, and of his thick bullet head having been barbarously pulled out by the roots. Scamp, however, served him, and got one stroke of the bear's paw which sent him far into the oats. Cribb again caught the hinder paw of the bear as he was twisting himself around, and Bruin, losing courage, attempted to escape by running. The dogs, however, having got warmed, would not now be denied, and attacking him together, we heard the sounds of a desperate worrying for a brief space; and then the bear, casting them off, made at once for the tree on which I sat, which he commenced to ascend, clutching firmly with his fore paws, and lifting himself up with his hinder ones, which tore the bark off at every stretch he made. He was almost at me before I could move myself in any way. "Look out for yourself!—there he goes!—he is nearly upon you!" shouted Mingo, and I made a convulsive grasp at my apology for a ladder. It stood firm, and I swung myself down in some way that I do not now comprehend. Mingo had by this time re-loaded, and taking a hurried aim, gave him a shot which caused him to unloose his hold, and fall heavily to the ground. Another combatant now entered the field, in the shape of Paddy Coghlan, who had come out to seek us, and conduct us