

## BAIT—BITES—AN

(By Richard L.

Confession is good for a time, many years ago now, with bait. I was cheechako, usual mistakes of the youngling out to Canada to make a way of outfit; for instance, of my last remaining sovereign ticket from Liverpool purchasing what the gun Road had assured me was weapons to take into the great unexplored West, at the same time careful all my rods and fishing tackle.

Stopping off at Nelson I considered that a somewhat lighter gun was better than the half-inch shot gun I had. I may have been more suitable for the head of the blue grouse as I was all the use I found for the distance of the Kootenay. I began to realize that I had not been bringing out the best of me.

It was in the spring of 1892 that I had prevented me from making the usual mistakes of the average man, and bringing out of the country money with which to purchase land. I had more tangible than experience and knowledge of human nature. I had myself within a very short time of the country being initiated into the prospecting for minerals. I had who, for a grubstake, had the part of initiator.

To break me in easily, the foxiness of his kind, short trip down the Kootenay by the riverside would be the discovery of mines rivaling richness, which would enable him to turn to the Old Country at a moment's notice.

Truth to tell, I was not on this point or so intoxicated by treatment as he appeared, but the open-air life I always hankered for, and I was gloriously content.

no resemblance whatever to any action undertaken by these creatures in their natural conditions of life. There is no more astonishing "show" of performing animals than this of seals or music-hall. The important point is that the animals are not taught or trained to acquire what we may call the "balance perception"; they already have that naturally developed to an astonishing degree. They are merely trained to apply this perception, and the muscular movements guided by it, in a novel and previously untried set of conditions. A delicate feature in the performance is that the animals are proud of their own skill, and as happy as though they were at home in the sea. It is probable that this wonderful sense of proportion in pressure and counter-pressures which we call the sense of balance is the origin of the mathematical faculty of man which suddenly makes itself manifest in boys and young men, without training, instruction, or parental transmission as such.

If man is ever really to fly it seems that he must avail himself of his instinctive sense of balance, as he has done in the use of the bicycle, and that no really satisfactory control of a flying-machine can be obtained by the conscious straining of observation as to lurching and pitching, and reasoned application of countervailing movements by means of levers "thoughtfully" selected and consciously set to work in the proper order. At present the flying-man is in the position of the centipede of whom it is related that, when asked to say which leg moved after which, "she fell exhausted in the ditch. Not knowing how to run." Flying animals, from insects upwards, by which we have been able to draw the most conscious attention to the movements by which their presiding sense of balance is satisfied, and more than do walking men or running centipedes. Our flying-men, with their anxious attempts to control the balance of the aeroplane, are like the baby learning to walk, excepting that there is to be no chance of their acquiring an unconscious, instinctive series of responses to dangerous locations of balance (as the baby eventually does), whilst they continue to use the present artificial series of levers instead of applying the natural balancing movements of the body through an appropriate mechanism.

I have mentioned above the exhibition of performing "eared seals," or "sea-lions," as they are called. They are among the very few exhibitions of performing animals which are, in my opinion, good and enjoyable. Certain social animals which not only live in companies, but are also very eager in taking food—such as these seals, most dogs, some monkeys, and also the elephant—can be readily trained without cruelty, by making use of their inor-

linate love of food and of a certain kind of love of display which is natural to them in their relations with one another. But all those exhibitions of performing animals in which the whip or the iron club are used to terrorize a beautiful wild animal should be recognized as the disgusting atrocities which they are, and prohibited. I lately saw an exhibition in London of performing lions which filled me with indignation. It is, no doubt, a wonderful thing that man, a weakling in muscle, but a demon in the power of inflicting pain and terror, should be able to bully and drive a couple of dozen of these splendid cats—making a mock and an abject thing of the king of beasts. But it is a vile passion in human nature which is gratified by the spectacle of the degradation of the mighty and makes it a joy to witness the terrorizing of the beast which stands for all men as the emblem of majesty and strength. The lions in the show to which I allude were made to perform ridiculous antics on a saw-saw, and were, by the proud confession of the trainer (with the interesting exception of one individual), in a state of suppressed revolt, coerced by the memory of intolerable pain. I once saw a bear in a London circus coerced by a screw fixed to its nose. The trainer turned the screw, and the bear gave a cry which was to be irresistible. I appealed at once to the spectators not to permit this abomination, and the performance was stopped. An interesting fact about the training of wild animals was told to me by a man (I forget his name) who exhibited some performing Russian wolves at the Westminster Aquarium. He said that about one wolf in eight could be trained. His method did not consist in bullying and hurting the wolves, but in rewarding them by food. He said that on the average seven out of eight showed no capacity for learning, and were rejected (killed) by him after sufficient testing. The teachable dog is the result of a selection by primitive man of the one in eight. Those who delight in the disgusting antics of performing animals do not appreciate the supreme beauty and grace of the natural movements of animals in their natural surroundings. Our brother animals have been bred to those perfect poses, to that fineness of shape and precision of action, by a greater "fancier" than any among us—Inexorable Nature. Is there anyone who would not rather see a beautiful horse walk, trot, gallop, and roll at his pleasure on a spacious sward than look on whilst he and his stupid fellow-dances in and out some flimsy barriers or stands uncomfortably and disgracefully on his hind legs at the bidding of the spur and whip of an unpleasant stable-woman, whom he might kick into the middle of next week but tolerate out of sheer goodness of heart? His attitude is that of amiable condescension to one who seems to him a foolish but perhaps well-intentioned menial.

The gallant who wishes to dance with the bride—and, as has been said, all are in honor bound to do so—must pull out a piece of silver and throw it into the plate. Not until he has succeeded in breaking or chipping that almost invincible piece of crockery has he won the honor he seeks. Few succeed in making an impression upon the plate for less than a sum equal to fifty cents of our money.

The money thus accumulated goes to the bride, and not unusually amounts to seventy-five or one hundred dollars, even where the crowd is apparently as poor as it can well be. This sum, in a rural district of Poland, is enough to start the young couple fairly in housekeeping.

Mr. Archibald Little tells the story of love, courtship and marriage in China in the Lady's Realm. She says there is theoretically no love-making in China. In all classes of life marriages are arranged by middle-men or middle-women, and the young people do not even see each other face till the wedding day. Marriage is regarded as a necessary duty in China, and the man who does not marry is called "a crooked stick." The bride becomes a virtually unpaid servant or lady-help of her father-in-law, to pacify whom the husband affords dislike or indifference, even if he does not feel it. The marriage customs in Canton, she says, are particularly indelicate, but perhaps worse still in the wild west, on the Kweichow border. But all through China the Christian Chinese are trying to modify the wedding observances so as to make them a little more modest. When bride and bridegroom "sit down together on the bridal bed, each tries to sit on the others dress, the one who does so is supposed to rule." There are no religious rites connected with a Chinese wedding. Mr. Little says that in place after place one hears of societies of girls pledged to one another not to marry, even in Yunnan, "where fathers breed pretty daughters as possible future articles of commerce." The writer bears witness to a change coming over the Chinese life. Young men are beginning to wish to see their brides before they marry. "Also young Chinese gentlemen have told me, 'Even amongst us we have husbands who are never happy unless they are with their wives.'"

In Siberia a bride, on entering her husband's house, must be prepared to show her skill in cooking. She is expected to give a dinner prepared with her own hands, as a test of the education she has received. If she pleases her guests it is taken not only as a proof that she is well qualified for her new position," but that her parents have trained their daughter so successfully.

In Norway, however, things are not quite so promising. The Norwegians are always trying to put the best foot forward, and they do it in reference to marriage as well as in reference to other matters.

It is said that a young man went out to seek a wife, and came to a farmhouse where there was more wit than money. The only thing of which the farmer could boast was one new sleeve to his coat. This must be made the most of. "Pray take a seat," he said, hospitably. "But this room is shockingly dusty," and, so saying, he went about wiping tables and benches with his new sleeve, while he kept the old one behind him.

His wife possessed one new shoe, and one only, but she made the most of it by pushing the furniture in place with it and keeping the other hidden beneath her skirts. "It is very untidy here," she said, "everything is out of place."

Then they called to the daughter to come and put things to rights. But the only new thing she possessed was a cap. So she kept putting her head in at the door, and nodding and nodding.

"For my part," she said, "I can't be everywhere at once." Thus they all tried to make the young man believe that the household was well-to-do.

A wedding among the Poles may certainly be said to hold its own among the more entertaining of marriage customs. There fun and profit are strangely mingled in the marriage festivities, for the bride depends upon the wedding festival for her dowry, and rarely fails to get enough to enable her to begin housekeeping with comfort.

After the wedding feast a dance is in order, and at that dance every man who would distinguish himself must, once in the evening at least, claim the bride for a partner. The honor of dancing with her, however, is not to be obtained lightly. The aspirant must win the privilege, and pay for it.

In one corner of the room the mother of the bride has taken up her position, with a plate

his motor car, and found it reached a speed of thirty-two miles an hour.

Black is like a dark frame, throwing what it surrounds into exquisite relief.

I have always said, and more than ever believe, that black velvet is the most beautiful thing a woman can wear.

To show the back seems to me to be absolutely modest. That the graceful line from the neck to the waist should be revealed seems to me to be in the interest of art and beauty. On the grounds of both beauty and modesty, it would be well if we saw more undraped backs and fewer undraped fronts in the grand tier of the opera house.

For several years two ravens have occupied a roomy cage in the stable yard of the Star hotel at Kingussie. They seem wonderfully contented with their lot, writes the one who knows them perfectly, and their glossy plumage, as well as their sprightly behaviour, indicate that captivity has neither broken their spirit nor interfered much with their health. Although their ordinary diet consists of raw flesh, both birds are fond of an occasional change, and they will never refuse the offer of a chocolate or other sweetmeat. I have watched them often, and they are quite fond of little dainties were presented, and generally enjoyed the same amusing programme. When a chocolate was held within reach of the wire-netting surrounding their home, the nearest bird hopped along its perch, and after a side-long look, a curious blend of suspicion and desire, grabbed the offering in its powerful beak, and, pretending to swallow it, looked up for a further gift. If and when the chocolate was similarly disposed of, a gleam of expectation shone in the glossy ones. When nothing more was tendered, the bird retired and promptly disgorged what it seemed to have gulped down and with its claws firmly gripped a morsel of sweetmeat, proceeded at leisure to break it up with its bill and eat it in detail. Sometimes, on receipt of the first offering, the bird hopped up to the highest perch and laid its tit-bit down, only to return at once for another. Both ravens appeared to take sweetmeats with great relish, in small portions and with relish. When the bits were wanting, the birds applied themselves industriously to the lumps of raw meat on the floor of their abode, at times suggested comfortable resignation, if not actual satisfaction.

A correspondent of the Autocar says he timed a hare running along a road in front of

Backs, as a few lovely women have revealed them in evening dress, when beautiful are very beautiful, writes a well known artist. They are lovelier to my mind than the back of the Venus de Medici, which is shapely but heavy. The modern back, as we have had glimpses of it, has less weight and more expression.

I use the word expression because that is precisely what I mean. Backs are like faces. They reflect thoughts and emotions, and in proportion to their power of expression are they beautiful. Now a heavy back is like a veiled face. It merely suggests. It does not express.

A fat back is simply a blanket of adipose tissue. To follow this argument to its end we must conclude that the thin back is the most expressive. And so it is, but it is not the most beautiful.

A back may be sufficiently expressive, and yet hide its spine. The backbone must not show. It should be well covered, but the covering of the shoulder blades should be light. For the chief beauty of the back is in the movements of the shoulders. A beautiful back, like the sea, should be in motion.

It must also be in proper proportion to the size of the body. No rule of mere dimensions can be laid down, but the eye instantly makes its relative measurements and the taste accepts the back as in proportion, or rejects it as out of proportion.

The shoulders should be wider than the hips. This will be denied, for it is not the canon of the Greeks or the later Romans, who admired huge hips. But it is the new figure, the elegant figure, the figure of the day.

The flesh of the back should be soft, but firm. Flabbiness, whether in an eyelid, the chin, the cheeks or the back is always ugly. The skin should be of fine, smooth texture. Its color should be white, but not of a dead white. I should rather describe it as peachy, for there would be an underlying tint of pink showing through the white.

There is no doubt at all that a back reveals character. Round shoulders spell laziness. A straight, firm back proclaims energy and self-reliance. A heavy back is a lazy back. The back is as expressive as the face. Perhaps more so. For its expression is natural, and can be changed with difficulty.

Women who have beautiful backs know how to dress them. They surround them, as a rule, with black, which is wise, for white or colors detract somewhat from their color.