

uttered a sound, with the exception of a slight snuffle on his part, as if the smell of the match were not to his liking. At the same time he put up a claw like a tree-root, at the end of a monstrous long foot, giving his muzzle a fretful kind of rub, whilst our eyes met. A most particularly wicked little one his was, as red as a live-coal; and not to speak of the great size of his head, there was something so peculiar about his colour, neither black, brown, grey, nor yet grizzly, but more of a steel-blue with a mildew over it, that I kept perfectly quiet, not so much as moving a hand to my loaded revolver, still less calling out to my companions behind. The lighted match, by the way, burnt me to the quick without being felt at the time.

The bear was undoubtedly a grizzly, and a fullgrown one, but from what I heard afterwards he must have been quite young. Possibly he observed that the case was similar in that respect on my side; at all events he dropped on his tracks again, keeping uphill as before. By that time the men could be heard on their way up in the same direction, crashing through the bush and laughing and talking like schoolboys. I knew that if my friend Lettsom caught sight of the beast, he was sure to fire, and being one of the best shots among us, not likely to miss; so to prevent accidents I sung out at last. "Ware snake—a rattler!" I hailed, in a tone as like a whisper as circumstances would allow; and that stopped all of them at once. "Which way?" called Lettsom; "don't lose sight of him—give us a chance!" I did not soon forget the bear's style of taking this noise. He reared on end again, looking back at me, giving a low growl, and seeming to consider whether any affront was meant. In fact for a moment or two it was doubtful if he would not come down like thunder; but finding all quiet, he concluded accordingly, and went off straight for the redwoods.

When the party joined me, all was safe; but my story was not by any means well received. No sooner did they take it in than they opened full cry against my behaviour in the matter; and the foremost to disapprove was Fred Lettsom. Fred had notions as to sport that might have done well enough at home in Yorkshire, but would certainly have been inconvenient to carry through California; though his worst luck was not to come in that shape, poor fellow. Among the party was a lump of a red-haired Missouri lad, who rejoiced in the odd name of Billy Rufus. He declared they saw so many b'ars of all sorts out-west that he made

no account of them, and asked nothing better than to tackle a real Ephraim, if such it actually was, which he much doubted. The surveyors on coming up, however, considered I was in the right, and had done quite properly; nor was it long before an incident occurred to turn the laugh altogether against Rufus himself.

We had finished our measurements on the hill-ground without further trouble of the sort, and had put in the last angle-post in that direction; after which we were making our way back to camp for the night. Rufus, who was our under-axeman, missed some article or other belonging to him, and returned to look for it near the post. He overtook us again in a speechless state, between hurry and fright, without his hat, and his red hair bristling like fire. By his account, when made out, he had seen a bear-cub of the most extraordinary size and colour standing at the foot of the new-made mound, apparently gazing at the survey-post in astonishment. Before he got within reach, it went close up, examined the Government hieroglyphics most carefully, then gave a yell and proceeded to claw at the post as if resolved to have it up. On this Rufus was of course running in, he said, to make short work with the creature; but hearing sounds desperately like more of the family on the way down, he concluded to come off for help. Billy's story was rather salt in some respects, especially as he declared there must have been half-a-dozen of them coming down in Indian file; but if he could be believed, the cub was neither of the black nor the brown breed; and at that time of the afternoon no one was inclined to go back and see. That there was some truth in the Missouri man's statement, appeared next morning; for clawed down the angle-post was, with marks in it which no ordinary bear could have made. A new post was put in, leaving further difficulties to be managed by the first settler on the claim. Our subsequent duty lay back again on the level toward San Mateo, where we thought no more about such points. But we were not to get off just so easily.

Our special trouble on the low ground was, as formerly, with the wild Spanish cattle. These long-horned, little, dingy-coloured savages were here worse than ever, herding over the rich virgin pasture, and ready to charge at all and sundry, if not mounted, the survey appearing beyond all to rile them up. The flags on the measuring-pins set them fairly mad, and whoever chanced to wear a red shirt was particularly marked out, till at times they